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ABSTRACT

The six articles in this collection explore the following topics relating to rhetoric: the distinction between the truth value and the exchange value of a message and between the signifier and the signified in a message; the rhetoric of silence in modern fiction; the way in which readers are influenced not only by what writers say but by how they sound, as determined by their written voice; the rhetorical use of the void, as exemplified in the "Liebestod," or love-death motif; the rhetoric of slogans, catchphrases, and graffiti; and the way in which literary criticism and reading theory shed light on each other. Authors are Richard M. Coe, Joanne Cockelreas, Richard L. Larson, Dean Bishop, Frank J. D'Angelo, and W. Ross Winterowd. (GW)

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A Symposium in Rhetoric

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Edited by

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INTRODUCTION

For two years in a row now, a consortium representing Texas Woman's University, North Texas State University, and East Texas State University has staged a symposium in rhetoric, to which it invites teachers from the Southwest. The Committee that arranges the symposium has operated wisely: it engages prominent rhetoricians and gives them free rein to talk about any aspect of rhetoric that currently interests them. That kind of freedom may produce a disparate set of talks—as it did this year—but at least, it allows speakers to choose a subject that they can develop with some enthusiasm and confidence. But where a thematic unity is not assured by prior arrangement, the temptation for the one who has to write an Introduction to the printed collection of the talks is to search for a unifying theme and try to force the talks into a contrived mold.

I probably should allow readers to make of these papers what they will, but my schoolmasterish disposition prompts me to impose a reductive unity upon them. With a little shoving and pushing and squeezing, I can fit these six papers into a single envelope: the use of rhetoric in the reading process. Without intending to do so, W. Ross Winterowd established that theme with the talk he delivered at the evening session, after the other five talks had been delivered in the afternoon. After exploring what psycholinguistics can contribute to reading theory and reviewing the four critical viewpoints that M. H. Abrams sets forth in *The Mirror and the Lamp*, Winterowd argues that the rhetorical method of criticism offers a fruitful approach to the reading of a text because it invites the reader to consider more aspects of a text than other critical methods do. What the earlier speakers had done was explore one or other of the dimensions of a text that Winterowd had schematized—arrangement or style or one of the four relationships Winterowd set up between a poem and such other reference points as the universe, the poet, the reader, or the poem itself.

Making use of the "double bind" theory from psychology, Richard Coe contends that if readers can be made to understand

the distinction between the *truth value* and the *exchange value* of a message and between the *signifier* and the *signified* in a message, they will better understand communications and more effectively and accurately respond to messages.

Where Richard Coe is concerned with the problems that a paradoxical command poses for the receiver of a message, both Dean Bishop and Joanne Cockelreas explore the paradoxical notion that a void or a silence can convey a message to the reader. "As a trope, the void is not a thing in itself," Dean Bishop maintains, "but an imagistic vehicle or an objective correlative whereby the artist can verify an idea or an emotion." He illustrates the use of this device by examining the *Liebestod* or love-death motif in Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, Wharton's *Ethan Frome*, and Lawrence's *The Rainbow*. Silence is the communicative element that Joanne Cockelreas investigates. As used by modern artists, silence is not empty but is fraught with meaning, manifesting itself in a reduction of semantics, syntax, and punctuation and in the "ultimate silence of the created persona."

There's a paradox or, at least, an oxymoron in the notion of a *written voice* that Richard Larson deals with in his paper. Concerned with the relationship between a writer and his readers, Larson proposes that readers are influenced not only by what the writer says (what Coe calls the *truth value*) but also by how he sounds (akin perhaps to what Coe calls the *exchange value*), by the written voice that appeals to the readers' auditory imagination. By way of illustrating the kind of heuristic he would like to develop, Larson analyzes the written voice that he detects in some short prose passages by George Orwell, Joan Didion, and Henry Miller.

Frank D'Angelo is interested in paradox too but as only one of a number of rhetorical forms that he finds in slogans, catchphrases, and graffiti. D'Angelo wants us to enable our students as readers by engaging them in the analysis of the great variety of forms, stylistic techniques, and purposes in these one-sentence messages.

There is a common thread running through these papers. What each of the authors spins off from that thread produces some new cloth, which the authors themselves or their readers may later make use of to stitch together a whole coat. If these symposia continue, Denton, Texas, may well become a mecca to which devotees of rhetoric return each April to discover the latest fashions in rhetorical fabrics and designs.

Edward P. J. Corbett
Ohio State University

THE RHETORIC OF PARADOX

Before I get to the specifics of my announced subject, I would like to establish a context by drawing together some of the significant statements which were made here last year.[1] Edward Corbett asserted in the main address that our field is in a very healthy state and that he is optimistic about the future of rhetorical studies. I want to make clear why I think this phenomenon (which I have elsewhere, for quite specific reasons, called a renaissance[2]) is not merely real, but also morally good, to make clear why I agree with Winston Weathers that "the call for a restitution of rhetoric is more than the self-serving admonition of the rhetorician."

As I myself did in my (somewhat naive) dissertation, Weathers set the rhetorical perspective in opposition to the old New Criticism. That opposition hints at the importance of using a definition of rhetoric at least similar to the one Corbett chose: the study of how people use and are used by symbols of inducement. That definition, as Corbett said, extends rhetoric beyond merely verbal communication. It also places the emphasis on the *how* and on the *people,* not on the symbols-in-and-of-themselves. Indeed, Corbett moved directly from that definition to a discussion of action theory, of verbal communication considered as a set of "speech acts"– a perspective which implies an actor behind the action (and hence raises the questions of responsibility and control).

James Bennett also spoke about speech acts, about the pragmatic aspects of communication. He cited Roman Jakobson's very suggestive model for holistic analysis–

Context
Content
Addresser ..... Addressee
Contact
Code

–and argued that rhetoricians are characterized by their concern not with texts, but with communicational relationships (with what

he called, following Jakobson, addresser-addressee relationships, or the social function of communications).

In what I perceive as a similar vein, Turner Kobler pointed out the special relevance of tagmemic linguistics to rhetoric. It is a tagmemic perspective, of course, which underlies the exciting work of Young, Becker, and Pike on invention and persuasion; I mention it here because it emphasizes not surface characteristics, but function, and therefore leads us to consider symbolic communications in the context of how they affect other behavior.

This brings me around to Gary Tate's insistence that rhetoric has to do with truth, that it is not just a *techne*, not just a set of amoral means for manipulating the audience's behavior. To be sure, the rhetorical emphasis is on the *how*, not the *what* of a message. That is precisely what makes the rhetorical perspective so important: of its very nature rhetoric is—like general system theory, cybernetics, dialectics, ecology, and all my favorite subjects—transdisciplinary. Rhetoric is not (if I may be excused an outmoded and misleading metaphor) another section of bricks in the house of knowledge; rhetoric studies the structures of the entire house because it is concerned with how knowledge is organized and communicated.

But the *how* cannot ultimately be separated from the *what*: "a search for a better word is," as Tate said, "a search for a better vision." Technique (or, for that matter, technology) is not neutral: the tools and methods used in an investigation clearly limit, and sometimes even determine, what that investigation will discover. There is no pure and value-free rhetoric: different rhetorical modes will bias those who know them toward different conclusions; thus the *how* itself may be evaluated in terms of its propensity to encourage the invention of pertinent and true conclusions. (Let me suggest, as an aside, that this is a fruitful and largely untouched area for those concerned with publi doublespeak.)

Because rhetoric is transdisciplinary, because it has the potential to encourage connections rather than separations of knowledge, because it studies not so much the content as the functional and structural interrelations of the symbols we use and are used by—I think that rhetoric has the potential to be of great service to humankind, especially in our current political-economic-ecological crisis. Having said that, I will get on to the discussion of a particular rhetorical structure which can, I believe, give us insight into a diverse set of socially typical communications and behaviors.

I want to consider the double bind as a rhetorical structure.

Double bind theory was originally promulgated as an explanation of schizophrenic behavior and was later used by its originator to explain alcoholism.[3] I suspect the theory will have to be modified, particularly to take into account the complex dialectic (or, if you prefer, feedback loops) between physical and mental structures, if it is to serve as a theory of schizophrenic behavior; but I suspect double bind theory will ultimately prove most useful as an explanation of non-psychotic pathological communication.

A double bind is a situation in which a person is faced with a paradoxical command which is important and cannot, apparently, be avoided. The term is often used loosely to designate any awkward choice, but a genuine double bind is more than a you-can't-have-your-cake-and-eat-it-too contradiction; it must involve a genuine paradox, that special type of contradiction which follows correct deductions from a single set of consistent premises such that either correct deduction seems to be invalidated by the other.

Double binds operate very much like the Cretan paradox, except that they are injunctions, not statements. If I say, "I am lying," and you believe me that means you should not believe me (because I am lying); on the other hand, as soon as you disbelieve that means I am telling the truth. Faced with such a paradox, a computer might oscillate eternally between the two untenable conclusions.

Were one under duress to obey it, a sign bearing the injunction, "Disregard This Sign," would exemplify a double bind. A similar case, and one which is (although rarely verbalized thus directly) actually quite common, follows from commands like "Be spontaneous." "Love me," when the definition of love implies spontaneity and lack of duress, is often such a paradoxical command. As soon as you obey, you are being obedient, not spontaneous. Like all double binds, it is a situation in which you are damned-if-you-do-and-damned-if-you-don't.

There are two characteristics of human (and certain other complex) communications which create a relatively high potential for paradox and consequently, in real-life situations, for double binds. Both have been detected by workers in various fields, including those who had to program computers and who had, therefore, to become conscious of aspects of communication which we normally do not think about. You cannot simply give a computer information; you must also tell it what to do with the information. The same is true of human communication; but because the instruc-

tions are often implicit in the context or conveyed nonverbally, we are not always aware of the duality. Nonetheless, any message has (1) a content which reports information and has what may be described as use- or truth-value; and (2) a relationship or command aspect which indicates how the person receiving it should relate to the message (and, consequently, to the person sending it) and which has what may be described as exchange-value:

content	relationship
report	command
information	meta-information
use- or truth-value	exchange-value

In certain highly rational communications (legal, professional, scientific, academic, etc.) we try to be concerned with the content—indeed, that is often what we mean by *objectivity*, *neutrality*, *disinterestedness*, and other such words. But in the bulk of human (and as far as we know, in all other mammalian) communication, the relationship aspect predominates.

In family arguments, for example, the content is often unimportant. If you have a traditional father and you contradict him, the question of who is right about the content quickly becomes trivial beside the fact that you have violated the traditional father-child relationship. Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson cite the case of a husband who said to his wife, "You're right, but you're wrong for arguing with me." The same wife became upset when the husband invited a friend to spend the night, not because she objected to the friend but because she objected to the invitation's being made without her approval.[4] Often people who run over at the mouth about trivia or make nonsensical statements are desperately asking for something on the relationship level—sometimes so basic as "Recognize that I exist." Certainly the frequency with which people comment, "What a nice day," is explained not by their concern about the weather, but by their need for an innocuous gambit.

If somone invites me up to see her etchings, I may usually take it that the being invited up is more pertinent than the etchings, at least in certain contexts. To make the same distinction in a totally different field, those of our colleagues who believe in open classrooms are saying that the relationship aspect of classroom communication must be given more emphasis and consideration than is traditional. And it has certainly been demonstrated by economic anthropologists that exchange often occurs precisely for the sake of establishing and maintaining relationships: in Malinowski's kula

ring, to cite the classic example, the objects of symbolic exchange have no use-value whatsoever. Likewise, the function of the incest-taboo, contrary to popular belief, is not to prevent inbreeding, but to force exogamy and thereby encourage friendlier relations between neighboring groups.

I suspect it is apparent how the existence of these two aspects can lead to double binds: since the communication is perceived as a single message, any contradiction between the two aspects is functionally paradoxical. A friend who did her dating in the late fifties tells me there was a rule which said the boy, and not the girl, had to know the way to wherever they were going. When my friend happened to know the way and the boy did not, she was in a minor double bind. She wanted to give him the directions for their use-value, so that they could get where they were going. On the other hand, she knew that if she did so he would never ask her out again. When I have told this story to my classes in mid-Michigan, I have noticed that about half the young women nod their heads in recognition, and they later tell me that this rule has not died out.

Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson write that *sick* communications (the type which are generally termed *mad* or *bad*) are characterized by "a constant struggle about the nature of the relationship" whereas in *healthy* communications the relationship is stable and the content can move to the foreground.[5] The emphasis on exchange-value (and the implied instrumental ethic) has been found clinically to typify pathological communication.

I will return to the implications shortly, but first I want to consider the other characteristic of human communication which makes us vulnerable to paradox. My old friends, the computer designers, have found that they must distinguish between marker (mass-energy, or the absence thereof: the hole in the computer card) and meaning (the information represented by that marker). This is essentially the same distinction which structuralists call signifier/signified, and very much like the familiar semantic distinction between the symbol and what it symbolizes—so long as we remember that it symbolizes not a thing, but a mental concept (which can in turn be related to real things).[6]

Men desire women not only for what they are, but also for what they signify. In communications among men in some societies (including ours) a woman signifies potency and therefore status and therefore dominance: to possess a woman is to be one-up over men without women (and over men with "less valuable" women—the value of a woman being determined by some imaginary ex-

change).[7] If I come to a cocktail party (or a hippy party) with a woman who matches the normative ideal of the particular subculture, I earn a certain amount of status. A parallel analysis could be made of the clothes I wear to that party which also have a material use-value and a socially determined exchange-value as signifier except in this case the signifier does not happen to be a person and the resulting paradoxes are less complex.

One other side of this particular coin is penis-envy, which, insofar as it exists, is a mystified desire for something signified by the phallus (e.g., the right to dominance in male-female relations or the right to be a professor instead of a faculty wife).

Of late there has been significant fuss about whether men should open doors for women. The action itself is, of course, insignificant: most women are capable of opening doors for themselves, but none that I know of get physical pleasure from doing it. The fuss has to do with what is signified by the action, which probably varies to some extent from instance to instance. Whether a woman gets pleasure or pain from having doors opened for her will depend upon how she feels about the underlying signification. (While being interviewed recently on the campus of a rather proper college I was informed—nonverbally, of course—that I should allow doors to be opened for me and not open them for other men; I felt this as a statement simultaneously about my privileged status as guest and about my one-down status as job-seeker.)

Serious pathologies arise when people confuse what they actually desire with the signifier which represents it (in Freudian terms, when they fixate on partial objects). One of the behavioral oddities of our society is that people continue to strive for wealth after they have more than they could conceivably use. Among the many human cultures which exist and have existed on this planet, such behavior is extremely atypical. As Western colonizers discovered when they strove to instill the Protestant work ethic, most peoples think it silly to keep working after they have fulfilled their needs for the near future. (Anthropologists have, incidentally, validated the survival function of this non-paranoid attitude.)

At any rate, to illustrate a process of invention, I found it odd that people continue to strain after money when they have no apparent use for it. Since I am familiar with the signifier/signified model, I immediately considered the possibility that they were not really after the money, but what it signifies. In our society, one achieves a certain amount of status for maximizing anything: most consecutive hours dribbling a basketball while balancing a goldfish

bowl on one's nose, largest collection of antique barbed wire, most tastefully furnished house in the neighborhood, most expensive (or most economical) car on the block, etc. The richest man in the world is such only because he has not divided his holdings (as, say the Rockefellers have); nonetheless being richest gives him status.

People, being as Aristotle said social animals, tend to do whatever yields status in their particular culture. Since money is seen as a signifier of status, it is understandable that it will be sought, whereas in a potlatch society wealth beyond a certain point causes one to lose status, and people therefore give it away.

Many people in our culture have difficulty expressing their emotions. Many parents find it hard to hug their children or to say, "I love you." Often they express their love by doing things for the children or by giving them things. It is conceivable, since money signifies power over goods and services and love is represented by goods and services that a child could come to associate love with money. But, of course, one who makes this unconscious association and seeks love by collecting money will never succeed: if he or she blames this lack of success on failure to collect enough money, he or she will go on collecting money forever. This particular neurotic pathology is not a final or complete explanation, but it seems to me that it has validity in some cases.

One of the ways in which people are different from computers is that in human communication one signifier often represents several signifieds, which is another way of saying that human meaning is overdetermined. If those signifieds happen to be contradictory, the use of the signifier can cause paradoxical ambiguity, as can a contradiction between signifier and signified, as can the representation of a single signified by several contradictory signifiers.

My success as a teacher is signified to me by increased knowledge, improved skills, and changed attitudes. My success as a teacher is signified to the legislature by production of student credit hours (and, since a certain number of SCH's equal an FTE which signifies a job-slot for me, I am likely to be influenced by the legislature's system of meaning). Insofar as an SCH really represents a quantity of education, that is all well and good. Insofar as there is a contradiction between education and SCH production, I am faced with a contradiction which is why it is always best to represent the signified as directly and consciously as possible. A similar analysis can be made of grades, which function as signifiers of learning; but we all know that they do not always represent it very accurately and that students are under great pressure to give grades

priority over learning (i.e., to confuse the signifier with the signified). Grades, SCH's and dollars are all signifiers which can be exchanged directly or indirectly for goods and services; and they are often quite distinct from the kinds of rewards which should motivate us in our work.

But that way lies another thesis; let me return to double binds. One of the interesting facets of double bind theory is that it contains its own solution. Faced with a paradoxical injunction, one has three alternatives: (a) ignore it, (b) oscillate between the two contradictory positions, or (c) transcend the paradox by communicating about it rather than within it.

If the first possibility exists, what is at stake is not important enough to constitute a genuine bind. But sometimes this possibility can be made to exist, usually by a transfer of power. Many of the students I will teach next year are sufficiently wealthy so that they will have no financial need to work in their lives; I suspect that will partially resolve the contradiction between grades and learning. The movement for women's equality, like the black power movement, has to do precisely with achieving an economic and political position from which certain oppressive double binds can be ignored.

If the third possibility can be achieved, the double bind is over, and one is described as *cured* or *rehabilitated*. What this usually involves is a transcendence of the content/relationship duality by communicating overtly about the relationship, i.e., making it the content of the message. There may still be a struggle about the nature of the relationship, but it is no longer masked and the chances of resolving it are improved.

One of the most interesting ways to get out of a double bind is to devise a counter bind; two double binds, like two negative factors, can cancel each other. In double bind therapy, the therapist seeks to impose a counter bind such that either choice involves a transcendence of the first bind.[8] Likewise, as often happens in folktales, a victim can sometimes devise a counter bind such that either choice forces the victimizer to desist.

But a double bind actually involves three injunctions: the first two constitute the paradox; the third (often unstated) prevents the victim from escaping. Until the tertiary injunction is overcome, the only real alternative is to oscillate futilely, in which case one is described as *schizoid* or *irrational* or by any of a number of terms which have the connotation *mad* or *bad*.

The tertiary injunction often involves an overt power relationship, as when an officer gives a soldier a paradoxical order. But the tertiary injunction may also operate by a mystification which prevents the victim from accurately perceiving the paradox or as is so common in politics by simply withholding the information necessary to resolve the bind.[9] It should be noted that withheld information constitutes a logical fallacy, usually called the "fallacy of the half-truth," or the "fallacy of suppressed evidence," and is often more important than information presented.[10] That is why witnesses must swear to tell not only the truth, but the whole truth.

If withheld information and withheld rhetorical skills can be used to manipulate human behavior, then knowledge is power, and the democratic dissemination of knowledge and knowledge-generating skills is one of the bases of political freedom. I have heard Martin Esslin describe a British university course in which students are taught skills of rhetorical analysis designed specifically to prevent their being fooled by television commercials. It seems to me that such a course is highly relevant, and probably should include a section on press releases, which are so often passed on uncritically by the news media. And I suspect that those skills are broadly as well as narrowly relevant, that they are but specific cases of inventive and analytic skills we should be teaching anyhow. Given the role of mass media in our political processes and given the impending world economic and ecological crisis, I believe it is more important than ever that students be given the rhetorical skills to perceive correctly certain aspects of contemporary reality, to make certain highly relevant connections, and to communicate what they discover in heuristically functional ways. Obviously, I believe that some of the conceptual models I have discussed here today and elsewhere on other days connect to such rhetorical skills.[11] I believe that if students know how to use such concepts as content/relationship, signifier/signified, double binds enforced by withheld information, etc., then they will better understand communications they receive and respond more effectively and accurately. But I am less concerned with these specific concepts than with the kind of rhetorical perspective which leads one to concepts of this type. That is where rhetoric has to do with truth.

Richard M. Coe
University of British Columbia

NOTES

[1]Mr. Coe's references to the papers delivered at the 1974 Symposium in Rhetoric are taken from *A Symposium in Rhetoric*, eds. J. Dean Bishop, Turner S. Kobler, and William E. Tanner (Denton: Texas Woman's University Prirnt Shop, 1975). (The Editors.) In citing Jakobson's formula from one of those papers, the word *content* has been substituted for the word *message* — because *message* should signify all the information which passes from Addresser to Addressee. (R.M.C.)

[2]"Rationale for the Independence of Rhetoric Programs," *Newsletter: Rhetoric Society of America* (May 1974). The focus of rebirth just now—and this matters —is on invention (and hopefully, as a consequence, arrangement) more than on style (which was, at any event, never dead, being preserved in the New Criticism, the grammatical emphasis of freshman composition, and elsewhere).

[3]"Toward a Theory of Schizophrenia" and "The Cybernetics of 'Self,'" rpt. in Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* (New York: Ballantine, 1972).

[4]Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin, and Don D. Jackson, *Pragmatics of Human Communication* (New York: Norton, 1967), pp. 80-81. This book contains an exceptionally clear explanation of double bind theory and related concepts.

[5]Ibid., p. 52.

[6]For the significance of this distinction, see "On how so little information controls so much behavior," rpt. in R. L. Gregory, *Concepts and Mechanisms of Perception* (New York: Scribner's, 1974) and Frederic Jameson, *The Prison-House of Language* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton, 1972), esp. pp. 23, 31-32.

[7]I use the word *imaginary* both in its ordinary sense and with the special connotations it has in Lacan's theory. See Anthony Wilden, *The Language of the Self* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1968) and "The Symbolic, the Imaginary, and the Real," in Wilden, *System and Structure* (London: Tavistock, 1972), and Jameson, op. cit., esp. pp. 120-23, 129-30.

[8]For concrete examples, see Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, op. cit., pp. 242-53, and Watzlawick, John Weakland, and Richard Fisch, *Change* (New York: Norton, 1974), Part III.

[9]Those of you who are interested in the literary implications of this concept may want to read a paper, in many ways similar to this one, in which I argue that Harold Pinter's dramatic technique is based on a double bind which is enforced by information withheld from the audience: "Logic, Paradox, and Pinter's *Homecoming*," *Educational Theater Journal* (Dec. 1975).

[10]See Edward P. J. Corbett, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* (New York: Oxford, 1971), pp. 85-86; and Howard Kahane, *Logic & Contemporary Rhetoric* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1971), pp. 4-7, 178-206.

[11]"Rhetoric 2001," *Freshman English News*, 3 (*Spring* 1974); "Eco-Logic for the Composition Classroom," *College Composition and Communication*, 26 (October 1975), 1232-237.

WITHIN THE PSYCHIC BUBBLE: THE RHETORIC OF SILENCE IN MODERN FICTION

Actually, my reading this paper runs counter to much of its thematic content. This essay, if it has any value at all, should be read silently, for my subject is silence. And even the physical distance that separates us as I speak--a distance that creates from the start an impersonal relationship--demonstrates a spatial distance that, of itself, negates what I consider to be the essential quality of the rhetoric of silence in modern fiction.

Silence, as a dominant element in modern literature, exists within the dimensions of consciously created space, and in all of life we see the affirmation of its existence. We also see the implications of its breakdown in schizophrenics and in overcrowded prisons. The result of such awareness is that the human condition, reflected in art, is always tied to the concept of spatial dimension, and its history goes back to the beginning of the visual and written records of the western world.

The use of contained space dates from antiquity when its presence denoted a divine bestowal of magical powers. For example, in Book VII of *The Odyssey* when Odysseus swims to the shore of the Phaeacians and sets out through town to meet Alcinous, Athena uses her formidable powers to protect Odysseus from the potentially hostile townsmen by "shedding a magic mist around her favourite in her concern for his safety." Thus Odysseus secures safe passage by being surrounded by a bubble of silent invisibility. This

same aura was rendered visually by the early Christian artists as full body halo or nimbus to denote divinity, and the tradition continues today in pictorial representations of Christ.

Across the Mediterranean, the Egyptians were concerned with the proper alignment of their religious structures in the cosmos and not with enclosed space. Concurrent with this phenomenon is the absence of inside space in Greek temples. In contrast, today's chapels are small and intimately enclosed in space and silence, and cathedrals imitate cosmic space in vast enclosed domes. One difference, then, between the ancient and the modern world is that it is believed that man, as mere mortal, did not conceive of his existence in space as a sensory experience until after the fifth century. In fact, throughout the Middle Ages he made no connection in art between the visual world and the visual field[1] even though his social behavior was conditioned by customs that required the observance of distance in social and personal actions. Behaviorally, man has always been a territorial animal subject to the social and proxemic rituals of approval and insult.

With the Renaissance, three-dimensional space was introduced as man regained stature in his own eyes. Employing a historical perspective, the modern French writer Georges Matore has analyzed metaphors in literary texts to arrive at a concept that he calls "the unconscious geometry of human space." His analysis indicates that following the Renaissance—in which spatial imagery was intellectualized and conceived of as geometric—a great shift occurred that placed emphasis on the "sensation" of space.[2] Progression since that time has been one of closely coordinated space to the point that now, in modern fiction, we see space existing about a fictional persona reduced once again to the same dimensions as that mist with which Athena surrounded Odysseus so long ago.

That space still remains protective, silent, and a sanctuary for the self; but now it also consists of intense self-consciousness within which man agonizes over his human condition. Thus enclosed space has evolved historically from the personal and magical, to the intellectual ordering of the universe, to the sense of space as deeply sensuous, psychic phenomenon. In fact, in stream-of-consciousness writing, perception as vision and psychic activity is broken up and fragmented in a manner that shocks ordinary awareness.

Important to this discussion of space as it relates to modern fiction is that space patterns structure literary scenes and entire works, but the success of the work depends upon the persona's ex-

periencing of a specific area of space exterior to himself that he considers actually to be a part of himself. Thus literary critics will do well to join the anthropologists, biologists, psychologists, architects, and linguists who are turning increasingly to the study of proxemics—that is, to the effects of spacing upon animal species, including isolated and crowded modern man. Such study complements the concept of territoriality, whose physical and psychological ramifications for man obviously provide means for understanding and controlling human behavior and, in fiction, for describing it.

The psychic bubble consists of that airy embryonic shield that is circumscribed by approximately an arm's length from the body. It is the cocoon of human metamorphosis: of the spatiality of identity and the temporality of change and evolution wherein the body grows to maturity and within which the body ages and dies. It is also the psychic mantle behind which the mind realizes its own identity and within which the sense of self eternally struggles to realize its own creation.

This spatial capsule is recognized as constituting part of the explicit presence of every human being. Its dimension is culturally generated and culturally regulated,[3] for the newborn totters into life with no realization of its own identity. New life emerges absolutely vulnerable. Perhaps one of the most poignant short passages in literature depicting this state is that described by Milton in Book IV of *Paradise Lost* in which Eve recalls when, newly created, she wanders to the water's edge with no sense whatever of her own being. She must learn. She must be told and taught by God, by Adam, and by experience. She must acquire the psychic bubble, by which she can recognize, through proxemics, acts of friendliness or hostility as her psychic bubble is respected or intruded upon. Realizing this, Satan works his art of seduction through rhetoric alone and observes always the decorum of proprietary distance.

Herbert Marcuse, however, states in *One Dimensional Man* that man is losing his inner space. If true, anthropologists will agree that man will lose his self-identity, that experience will become intolerably stressful, and that he will become alienated and will deteriorate rapidly into various forms of group behavior that we associate with the loss of human activity. Individually, he will be subject to psychic dysfunction. Collectively, he will degenerate into a cultural sink.[4] The reason is that man, like all the animal world, must build around him a space that protects himself and others and that he must bear that space much like the young boy bearing the chalice of

his love in Joyce's "Araby." That space is, in effect, his psychic bubble, and it expands and devaluates in ever-widening circles to make up four areas: the intimate, the personal, the social, and—at its far extreme—the public world.[5]

The intimate dimension of the psychic bubble involves contact activities such as love-making and wrestling. The language of the spatial relationship within this dimension consists of the whisper, the thought. The far phase of intimacy extends from six to eighteen inches. At this distance hands touch, the body does not touch. A stranger violating this distance elicits anger: "Get your face out of mine!" "Don't stand behind my back." It is intimate distance that opens the terrifying scene in Andre Malraux' *Man's Fate* and that closes Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*. Martin Joos might make the judicious correlation here that the information we receive at this distance is not about what is outside the skin; the information received is essentially sensory, and the language appropriate stylistically to such distance he would term the intimate or, still very close, the casual style.[6] Because man essentially is a non-contact species, we experience, regardless of how intellectually liberal, a sense of shock when we observe man break the taboo that forbids strangers to engage in intimate body-touching activities. Thus we may also vividly remember Emma Bovary's rejection of the sharing of intimate space when she stares impassively into the far distance during the infrequent and unwanted intimate scenes with the husband she does not love.

Personal distance extends in the close phase from one and one-half to two and one-half feet, and at its far phase, from two and one-half to four feet. This is the distance subjects choose when they speak about personal interests and involvements. This distance indicates friendship, and when that expectation is unexpectedly violated in a social situation, we have the potential for drama as core action like that found in Katherine Mansfield's Miss Brill, who silently enjoys her own thoughts in her own space dimension while she watches the social world of people passing her park bench, and the public world of the musical performance in the bandstand at a distance that, for Miss Brill, is slightly blurred. But it is on the park bench that she expects friendliness and meets instead with the hostility of the young lovers. Mansfield virtually structures her story on the principle of proxemics and silence. This same distance may be observed more obviously in *The Way of All Flesh* in which Samuel Butler effectively describes a scene on a sofa which Christina, the mother, uses as enclosed space to sweat out confessions from

her son. Christina, employing the power inherent in intimate distance, quite effectively penetrates Ernest's bubble.

The third perimeter, that of social distance, encompasses a distance from the body of between four to seven feet. This is the distance for impersonal business, for the casual social gathering. This is the distance that proves so painful for the priest in *The Power and the Glory* despite the confessional screen, and that is so fastidiously observed aboard ship and in Paris among the characters in *The Ambassadors,* where Strether's sense of propriety violated derives in large part from sensing that Chad Newsome has breeched more than mere social distance with the charming Madame de Vionnet.

The far phase of social distance, that of from seven to twelve feet, demands in our western culture a distance all people wisely observe in the presence of important people sitting at their desks, and this is the distance established when the judge says "Approach the bench." It is the distance that haunts Kafka's characters in many of his works, particularly in *The Trial.* Social distance usually will elicit from the writer under these circumstances the consultative style or that language level equivalent to standard English. The use of social distance is particularly noticeable as method of dramatic characterization in Joyce's "The Dead," when Gabriel Conroy feels isolated from the friendly gathering just prior to the dinner party. In the English-speaking world an invisible and protective wall of privacy surrounds a small group the moment its members begin to converse, and to approach, to "break in," creates apprehension for the "outsider." Thus Joyce dramatically demonstrates the alienation of Conroy, who at that moment can only retreat into the restricted dimension of isolation and silence in his own intimate space.

Thoreau in *Walden* observes the problem in reverse that can involve the proxemics of social distance. He writes: "One inconvenience I sometimes experienced in so small a house, was the difficulty of getting to a sufficient distance from my guests when we began to utter the big thoughts in big words. You want room for your thoughts to get into sailing trim . . . (and) . . . our sentences wanted room to unfold and form their columns in the interval. Individuals . . . must have suitable broad and natural boundaries . . . (and) . . . in my house we were so near that we could not begin to hear. . . ." Thoreau hints at the syntax that may be associated with proxemics: namely, that considered thought requires distance, both real and psychic, and must be couched in language not too deviant from

standard or, for his day, formal English. The nearer the speaker, the less neutral the ground; the less consideration of thought, the more immediacy; the more informality, the greater the potential for breakdown into deviant syntax.

The fourth distance, that of the public posture, has its close phase at twelve to twenty-five feet. This is the distance that so frightens the Snopes boy in the opening description of Faulkner's "Barn Burning" as he listens from the back of the room to the judge and his father and then loses that safe distance when the judge orders him to enter the dimension of personal distance represented by the judge and the father, both symbols to the boy of contradictory conceptions of justice and vengeance. Similarly, public distance at its far phase of twenty-five feet or more lulls Mrs. May in Flannery O'Connor's story "Greenleaf" into a false sense of safety which continues as paralyzed disbelief when, at the conclusion of the story, she is gored by the scrub bull she so hates.

Distance also controls the drama of Lawrence's "The Prussian Officer" from its far phase, which permits the corporal a sense of psychic safety, to the captain's invasion of the corporal's psychic bubble by the act of touch. The officer is finally murdered because he miscalculates the safety factor that divides flight distance from fight distance, and he oversteps that critical zone after reducing the young corporal to the mental level of a hunted, wounded animal.

Obviously artists have recognized that space is dynamic; as Edward Hall states, "great writers perceive and communicate the meaning and uses of distance as significant cultural factors in interpersonal relations" (p. 94). What perhaps is not so obvious, but what is even more present, is the world of psychic experience that occurs as silent activity within the psychic bubble. This innermost area of existence is dramatized by the artist by means of the rhetoric of silence, and it thus becomes profitable to examine the nature of silence and the tools the literary artist employs to achieve meaning, for silence is finally the critical component of modern man's spatial existence.

Attitudes toward silence, of course, are also culturally conditioned, and our society seems determined to eliminate it as much as possible. People in big cities cannot think even at night, and animals are driven to eating their young because of the roar of passing jets. Even human speech may destroy silence. The human mechanism, wonderfully adapted to speech making, puts into per-

fect synchronic order 25,000 neurological and muscular impulses when it generates, in speech, approximately fourteen phonemes per second.[7] The rate rises dramatically if the speaker uses common phrases and cliches—another noise factor.

We long then for a sense of silence; and modern fiction, poised so often between outrage and prayer,[8] reflects these wordy times of proliferation in language, noise, and image impinging upon image. The rhetoric of silence therefore may be defined first as speech moored to a persona who may not be speaking—who, quite to the contrary, may be existing, or thinking, or painfully trying to experience that most difficult of acts, *being*. For example, Virginia Woolf's search for a private vision of reality is extremely subjective; and in its sensory intensity, she employs in her fiction a form of implied and therefore silent speech. Stylistically she imitates language that precedes logical sentences to their syntactical minimum.[9] She exploits the element of incoherence and is conscious always of the psychic bubble that surrounds individual man. In her essay, "Modern Fiction," she writes: "Life is . . . a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end."[10] One need only remember the opening scene of *Mrs. Dalloway* to recognize in the novel a multiplicity of devices that are elliptical and paratactical and that denote a grammar which, in itself, stylistically imitates silence.

A second point contributing to a definition of the rhetoric of silence originates in the fact that the modern artist is weary of the historicity of everything spoken and written. Like the sculptor who designs a mechanical mobile timed to destroy itself or the dancer who appears on stage and simply stands motionless in the halo of a floodlight, many modern writers are weary of all references to everything; and so we experience today the fallen language of our fallen natures falling even more in artistic prestige; and as it descends, the weight of balance on the scales, causes silence to rise proportionately. Quite simply, we find ourselves lacking words because, as Susan Sontag notes, we have too many of them.[11]

Noticeably, many of our great works leave silence in their wake, but significantly, it is a silence not empty but completely filled. It is the silence of unexplicated irony. We perceive such silence in the conclusion to *All Quiet on the Western Front* when one of the last, stray, undirected bullets of the war kills the young soldier. By assuming an omniscient view, Remarque leaves the soldier in silent isolation on the vast landscape of a ravaged, war-torn Europe.

There are several uses for silence as a rhetorical device that, in turn, contribute to its definition. The first is to negate thought for the apprehension of pure existence. In this sense silence becomes in modern fiction a metaphor for a "cleansed, non-interfering vision" (Sontag, p. 16). Such interpretation forces a re-interpretation of Keats' view of his Grecian urn as it "teases us out of thought" and leads to eternity which is silent and thoughtless because incomprehensible. Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* undoubtedly finds much of its appeal in the fact that the protagonist searches in solitary silence for understanding, for pure existence; and in *Demian* silence is finally, in the affirmative sense, "a zone of meditation, (a) preparation for spiritual ripening, an ordeal that ends in gaining the right to speak" (Sontag, p. 6). Growth as release from the confines of a darkened psychic bubble becomes the secret of Demian's search, and when he reaches his first psychic awareness, it is represented by Hesse as a metaphor of silence that represents a vast visionary dimension of the psychic bubble. Demian discovers that "everything, even the most ordinary matters, resembled gentle persistent hammer blows on the same spot within me; all of them helped me to form myself, all of them helped to peel off layers of skin, to break eggshells, and after each blow I lifted my head a little higher, a little more freely . . . out of the shattered shells of the terrestrial globe." Thus the process is that of the peeling back of the self and of language and of layers of the facade people present to the world and the facade behind which they hide. The levels to be penetrated to inscape or escape in *Demian* are used in several ways: as the dominant metaphor of the novel, as the emerging self of the newly aware Demian, and as the visionary proxemics of encased man seeking release.

The encasement motif finds its most bizarre demonstration in Kafka's "The Metamorphosis." Gregor Samsa's self-release from society results in the gruesome comedy of suffering a greater physical imprisonment. The story observes a style that is precise, regular, and conventional in syntax and vocabulary. Thus the anxiety that arises in the reader derives precisely from the fact that Gregor Samsa *is* a bug; and the ensuing silence felt from the first isolation of the persona to the final dimness of his vision in death results in part from perceiving that the outer mantle of the psychic bubble of Gregor Samsa consists of a huge insect and, further, that the personal and social dimensions of Samsa's world reach no further than a dusty area under a sofa in a closed room. Kafka read Pascal

intensely, and Pascal states in *Les Pensees*: "We sail within a vast sphere, ever drifting in uncertainty, driven from end to end. When we think to attach ourselves to any point and to fasten to it, it wavers and leaves us; and if we follow it, it eludes our grasp, slips past us, and vanishes forever."

The result, then, of avoiding history, of connotation, is to enter excruciating solitary self-consciousness. This is the state of the psychic bubble of modern man: exhausted, negative toward history and its semantic pile-up, longing for a connection (in the Forsterian sense) but a connection left perpetually open. The final effect is the pursuit of artistic activity more deviously than before, and such deviousness includes reduction in semantics, in syntax, in punctuation, and in the ultimate silence of the created persona reaching out from his psychic bubble for the infinite wordless.

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NOTES

[1]Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art* (New York: Vintage, 1951), II, 10-16.

[2]*L'Espace Humain: L'expression de l'espace dans la vie, pensee et l'art contemporains* (Paris: Editions La Colombe, 1961), discussed by Edward T. Hall in *The Hidden Dimension* (New York: Anchor Books, 1969), pp. 93-94.

[3]See Edward T. Hall, *The Silent Language* (New York: Anchor Books, 1959), pp. 20-34, 97-105; and Benjamin Lee Whorf, *Language, Thought, and Reality* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1956), pp. 252-65.

[4]John B. Calhoun, "A 'Behavioral Sink,'" in *Roots of Behavior*, ed. Eugene L. Bliss (New York: Harper, 1962), Chap. 22.

[5]Terminology and specific distances from body contact used in the following passages belong to Edward Hall. See *The Hidden Dimension*, p. 114.

[6]*The Five Clocks* (New York: Harbinger, 1967), pp. 19-28.

[7]Eric F. Lenneberg, *Biological Foundations of Language* (New York: Wiley, 1967), p. 127.

[8]Ihab Hassan, *The Literature of Silence* (New York: Knopf, 1967), p. 22.

[9]Northrop Frye in *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1957), p. 61, states that "The practice of cutting out predication, of simply juxtaposing images without making any assertions about their relationship, is consistent with the effort to avoid oratorical effect."

[10]*The Common Reader* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1925), p. 212.

[11]"The Aesthetics of Silence," *Styles of Radical Will* (New York: Dell, 1969), p. 22.

The Rhetoric of the Written Voice

In this essay I will be trying to comment on some elements in the rhetoric of style. I will not use the term *style* much, nor will my comments be about texts in imaginative literature, though I hope that these notes will be applicable to studies in imaginative literature as well as to the kind of non-fiction prose that I will be analyzing. I will not be talking about *style* in the customary rhetorical terms (through analysis of familiar patterns of syntax or through study of schemes and tropes), or in quantitative terms, or in the terms that Young and Becker use in defining style as an author's characteristic route through the choices presented to him/her during pre-writing and writing ("Toward a Modern Theory of Rhetoric: A Tagmemic Contribution," in Martin Steinmann, Jr., ed., *New Rhetorics* (New York: Scribners, 1967), p. 104). My comments do owe much to Richard Ohmann's essays, particularly to his "Prologomena to the Analysis of Literary Style," but I shall not be trying to apply his conceptual framework to my texts.

First, I need to identify and explain a few premises. I take it for granted that written discourse, even much literary discourse which is not easily identifiable as "addressed" writing in Kenneth Burke's sense of that term, participates in a transaction with its readers. One is, of course, harder put to think of writing than of speaking as part of a transaction with someone else, because the term *transaction* speaks of the receiver of the discourse having some impact on the discourse that is produced, and that may not appear to happen in written discourse except where the person receiving the discourse is an intermediary between the author and his ultimate audience—for example, an editor. Still, as recent research on reading is demonstrating to us, the feelings of the reader affect what the reader reads or discovers in the text, and, according to David Bleich, properly so: "with regard to symbolic works,

all aspects of their existence, function, and effect depend on the process by which they are assimilated by an observer. These processes are different in each individual, making the act of assimilation of special importance. To say that perceptual processes are different in each person is to say that reading is a wholly subjective process and that the nature of what is perceived is determined by the rules of the personality of the perceiver" (*Readings and Feelings: An Introduction to Subjective Criticism* (Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1975), p. 3). If the feelings of the one who receives discourse do indeed influence what he reads, then it is possible, I think, to speak usefully of a transaction between any reader and the writer of discourse, and my premise can be maintained at least for the purposes of this discussion.

Second, I take it that the transaction between reader and writer is influenced by the impressions formed by the reader of the writer, as the reader reads. These impressions add up, I am assuming, to a characterization of the perceived writer formulated by the reader. The reader discovers, without necessarily seeking the information or deliberately abstracting it into descriptive statements, what sort of person he or she is dealing with, and reacts accordingly to the ideas and representations of reality encountered in the text. The reader may form judgments of the worth of what is said, of its credibility or importance, and of his or her willingness to continue participating in a transaction with that writer.

Whence comes this characterization of the writer, on which the reader bases in part the role he or she will play in this communications transaction? Partly, of course, from what the writer says directly about himself or herself, and from what the writer allows to be inferred about his or her knowledge, way of organizing or approaching discourse, and fairness in dealing with divergent ways of viewing that subject. We refer to these matters when we speak of the writer's *ethos* and discuss the *ethical proof* that a writer brings to bear on his subject and argument. In this essay I want to argue briefly that, in addition to being influenced by what the writer says and how he or she approaches the subject, we are influenced as readers by how the writer *sounds*, by what my title refers to as the "written voice" in a text we read.

I am suggesting that our experience of a written text—the transaction in which we participate with a writer when we read—has elements of a dramatic encounter; it includes a response by the reader's imagination—his or her auditory imagination—to the sounds heard during this imagined encounter with the text. I am suggesting

that a part of our response as readers is to the way we *hear* a text in our imagination, and that every written utterance we encounter has its own imagined sound to which we as readers respond. I am further suggesting that a good part of the *ethos* of the writer—I am tempted to refer to the *speaker* of the piece—that we infer from reading comes from the way the piece sounds to our auditory imagination. What we hear leads us to make judgments about our affinity with, our sympathy for, or our distance from the writer, and about the kind of appeal or claim that the writer is making on us. If we are prepared to recognize this imagined auditory appeal, we will have to evaluate the importance of that appeal as we consider the rhetorical design and functioning of any piece of discourse.

In citing the auditory appeal of written texts and in saying that each text we encounter probably has its own distinctive auditory appeal, I doubt that I am making assertions that will contradict the experience of most listeners or readers. I expect that most of you may have remarked to yourselves, as I did some years ago in teaching a class in freshman English about some major essays by well-known twentieth-century writers, that a major reason for the differences in our experience of writers is not just in the subjects they treat, the premises they work from, the positions they take, the perspectives from which they view their subjects, the lines of reasoning they adopt, the conclusions they come to, and so on, but is also in the differences in how they sound. If one examines a group of writers such as Orwell, Mailer, Baldwin, Steinem, Didion, or Sontag, he will respond to them differently because they produce different experiences in the auditory imagination. And one will develop preferences among them, not to mention willingness to keep company with some and reluctance to read others, because some of those auditory experiences are pleasing and attractive, or provocative, and some are unpleasing and unrewarding. A writer's words, that is, do much more than refer (as symbols) to reality and establish relationships among ideas and events. They express feelings and reveal attitudes. For the writer/speaker, indeed, they create a self.

The question I raise in this paper, then, is to what can we attribute the differences in the *sound experience* (the term is often applied to poetry, I think) of texts we encounter. I believe that identifiable elements in the language used by writers contribute a good deal to our auditory experience, interacting no doubt with the substance of what we hear and how we feel about that substance,

but independently describable, too. I suggest that these elements in the language of various writers are open to empirical description, and I am reasonably sure that sophisticated studies in grammar, phonetics, prosody, and semantics could assist the rhetorician in identifying the sources of different kinds of auditory appeals. I am not prepared yet to attempt systematically these kinds of studies in language—though they would be one area in which the collaboration of linguistics, semantics, and rhetoric might, I think, be especially fruitful—but I do want to suggest here the beginnings of some common-sense empirical investigations of prose texts that might put us on our way toward some sensitive investigations.

What I am calling for, and would like to try to initiate very modestly, is a heuristic for the study of vocal/auditory effects in the rhetoric of written discourse—a study of effects that go beyond the transmission of ideas and points of view into the psychology of response to rhythms, intonation, emphases, and distinctive locutions. The goal would be an organized way of talking about the production of sound and analyzing the effects of sound in discourse—an organized way of inquiry that would illuminate the work not only of the scholar and theorist in rhetoric, but also the work of the *rhetor* (i.e., the practicing writer who wants to address a message to a reader).

There have been some attempts at a heuristic of the sort I am discussing, though the writers I am about to cite might not recognize my characterization of their work. The first scholar who comes to mind is Leslie Whipp of the University of Nebraska, whose descriptive studies of professional and student writers have demonstrated that the systematic examination of syntax and semantics in a text can yield important understanding of how an author works. Whipp's work is not widely published, and the best example I can cite of his studies is in an unexpected place, an essay in *Elementary English* two or three years ago, entitled "Conflicting Claims: Parental Expectations and Professional Expertise," in which Whipp applies his analytical techniques to an example of children's writing.*

*I have reprinted that essay and another less well known, called "Morning Haze," in my collection *Children and Writing in the Elementary School: Theories and Techniques*, Oxford University Press, 1975. Edward P. J. Corbett mentions an earlier essay of Whipp's in *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*. See *College English*, 25 (October, 1936), 18-22, "A Slide-Rule Composition Course," by Margaret A. Ashida and Leslie T. Whipp.

But Whipp is not talking so much about the written voice as he is talking, in great detail, about a variety of features in the language of a piece of writing. And his emphasis is not so much on understanding and interpreting the auditory experience of a text as it is on discovering the differences between relatively mature and relatively less mature writing—on giving the young writer a standard for judging his or her own work by showing what are the attributes of mature writing.Thus, although Whipp's procedures are suggestive, they don't offer the heuristic I'm calling for in this essay.

A second writer, more familiar to most of us, whose work has been moving much more squarely toward the goal I am seeking here, is Walker Gibson. Gibson helped to direct the study of composing in the NDEA/EPDA institutes of the sixties toward the writer's control of voice, by a kinescope he did for the old Commission on English called, as I recall, "The Speaking Voice and the Teaching of Writing." But neither in that short essay nor in subsequent articles did Gibson do much more than call attention to some of the phenomena I am talking about as apt emphases in the teaching of writing. I am not aware that he has yet attempted to explore the implications of his ideas for rhetorical theory and for study of the workings of rhetorical texts generally. The closest Gibson has come to offering the kind of heuristic I am calling for is in the Appendix to his book *Tough, Sweet, and Stuffy*, published some years ago by Indiana University Press, but not so well known as it should be. In that book Gibson tries to classify some American prose into one or another of the three classes indicated in his title, and he provides an Appendix, called "The Style Machine," in which he develops some tests of toughness, sweetness, and stuffiness in the writing about him. Gibson's style machine has helped me personally, and I commend it to anyone who is interested in the problems I am discussing here. But Gibson in that book is at the beginning of his recent concerns with public language; he is trying to assess the kinds of languages that members of the public encounter from novelists, advertisers, bureaucrats, journalists, and so on, and his main concern seems to be to help readers gauge the extent to which what they are reading qualifies as tough talk, sweet talk, or stuffy talk. Such guidance is valuable, but in my judgment the relatively sharp focus in Gibson's book keeps it from being the sort of heuristic needed for inquiring into the sounds of skilled writers who do not obviously qualify as tough talkers, sweet talkers, or stuffy talkers. We still need, I think, a heuristic that will help us get at the varied and complex phenomena of language that cause

us to hear what we hear when we read, thus causing us to experience a work in a special way in our auditory imaginations—with important consequences for our role in the rhetorical transaction.

In the rest of this paper, I want to cite just a few examples of the kinds of phenomena I am talking about. Obviously I cannot give an exhaustive enumeration of these phenomena. The passages simply illustrate and highlight a few features that, together, help establish the authors' voices in the pieces before us. The passages are by reasonably well-known writers, but are not from works usually identified as literary (though, as David Bleich cites Norman Holland on p. 21 of *Readings and Feelings*, it is the reader who determines whether a given work is literature). Nor are they from the Norman Mailers and the Tom Wolfes of our time—people whose voices are so conspicuous as not to tax any heuristic we might be experimenting with. Yet they do appear to be rhetorical in the sense of being "addressed"; and therefore, though I have time to cite only a few of the most obvious elements in each passage, they may suggest the kinds of data I hope this heuristic can accommodate and explain.

I

> Meanwhile I am assuming that the tendency of mechanical progress is to make life safe and soft. This may be disputed, because at any given moment the effect of some recent mechanical invention may appear to be the opposite. Take for instance the transition from horses to motor vehicles. At a first glance one might say, considering the enormous toll of road deaths, that the motor-car does not exactly tend to make life safer. Moreover it probably needs as much toughness to be a first-rate dirt-track rider as to be a broncho-buster or to ride in the Grand National. Nevertheless the *tendency* of all machinery is to become safer and easier to handle. The danger of accidents would disappear if we chose to tackle our road-planning problem seriously, as we shall do sooner or later; and meanwhile the motor-car has evolved to a point at which anyone who is not blind or paralytic can drive it after a few lessons. Even now it needs far less nerve and skill to drive a car ordinarily well than to ride a horse ordinarily well; in twenty years time it may need no nerve or skill at all. Therefore, one must say that, taking society as a whole, the result of the transition from horses to cars has been an increase in human softness. Presently somebody comes along with another invention, the aeroplane for instance, which does not at first sight appear to make life safer. The first men who went up in aeroplanes were superlatively brave, and even to-day it must need an exceptionally good nerve to be a pilot. But the

same tendency as before is at work. The aeroplane, like the motor-car, will be made foolproof: a million engineers are working, almost unconsciously, in that direction. Finally—this is the objective, though it may never quite be reached—you will get an aeroplane whose pilot needs no more skill or courage than a baby needs in its perambulator. And all mechanical progress is and must be in this direction. A machine evolves by becoming more efficient, that is, more foolproof; hence the objective of mechanical progress is a foolproof world—which may or may not mean a world inhabited by fools. Mr. Wells would probably retort that the world can never become foolproof, because, however high a standard of efficiency you have reached, there is always some greater difficulty ahead. For example (this is Mr. Well's favourite idea—he has used it in goodness knows how many perorations), when you have got this planet of ours perfectly into trim, you start upon the enormous task of reaching and colonising another. But this is merely to push the objective further into the future; the objective itself remains the same. Colonise another planet, and the game of mechanical progress begins anew: for the foolproof world you have substituted the foolproof solar system—the foolproof universe. In tying yourself to the ideal of mechanical efficiency, you tie yourself to the ideal of softness. But softness is repulsive; and thus all progress is seen to be a frantic struggle towards an objective which you hope and pray will never be reached. Now and again, but not often, you meet somebody who grasps that what is usually called progress also entails what is usually called degeneracy, and who is nevertheless in favour of progress. Hence the fact that in Mr. Shaw's Utopia a statue was erected to Falstaff, as the first man who ever made a speech in favour of cowardice.

—George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier*

Commentary

The voice that comes through this passage by Orwell is that of one who is both assertive and playful. Most, though not all, of the sentences are categorically declarative—the work of one who is unqualifiedly confident in his pronouncements and criticisms of his society. The speaker relishes forceful comparisons and emphatic adverbs (as Orwell often does): "anyone who is not blind or paralytic can drive it (the motor-car) after a few lessons," and "The first men who went up in aeroplanes were superlatively brave." He evidently enjoys bringing his argument to a close by following up a vision of the ultimate ("Colonise another planet . . . the fool-

proof universe") with a paradox ("all progress is seen to be a frantic struggle towards an objective which you hope and pray will never be reached"), and then adding the further paradoxical reference to a statue erected to one who speaks in favor of cowardice.

But this playful assertiveness is qualified by the structure of the passage; the speaker is not just gamesome. Regularly he cites what seems to be the case, then corrects the misapprehension; he contrasts his listener's gullible inferences with the facts as he has clearly seen them, until he is ready to unfold his vision of an endless train of mechanization. The occasional subjunctives help make the contrasts between what might appear to be the case and what is true. At the very moment of enjoying the wit in which he puts his visions of the future, the speaker is identified as one both perceptive and earnest in his reasoning. Hardly any analysis of the passage is needed in order for the reader to hear this self-characterization.

II

> Every weekday morning at eleven o'clock, just about the time the sun burns the last haze off the Santa Barbara Hills, fifteen or twenty men gather in what was once the dining room of a shirt manufacturer's mansion overlooking the Pacific Ocean and begin another session of what they like to call "clarifying the basic issues." The place is the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, the current mutation of the Fund for the Republic, and since 1959, when the Fund paid $250,000 for the marble villa and forty-one acres of eucalyptus, a favored retreat for people whom the Center's president, Robert M. Hutchins, deems controversial, stimulating, and, perhaps above all, cooperative, or *our kind*. "If they just want to work on their own stuff," Hutchins has said, "then they ought not to come here. Unless they're willing to come in and work with the group as a group, then this place is not for them."
>
> Those invited to spend time at the Center get an office (there are no living quarters at the Center) and a salary, the size of which is reportedly based on the University of California pay scale. The selection process is usually described as "mysterious," but it always involves "people we know." Paul Hoffman, who was at one time president of the Ford Foundation and then director of the Fund for the Republic, is now the Center's honorary chairman, and his son is there quite a bit, and Robert Hutchins' son-in-law.
>
> —Joan Didion, *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*

Commentary

Unlike the voice in the passage by Orwell, this voice is calculatedly unemphatic. Seemingly we hear a person just recording details, without inference or comment. Points are made through the juxtaposition of details ("shirt manufacturer's mansion" and "'clarifying the basic issues'"), through understated colloquialism ("quite a bit"), through metaphoric exaggeration ("mutation"), and through the detachment hinted at in such phrases as "what they like to call," "reportedly based," and "usually described as." The speaker lets us know that she is committed to none of the language that follows these phrases and is indeed doing nothing more than reporting. The effect is reinforced by the writer's extended use of quotation marks, which suggest that the words enclosed should be sounded, perhaps, with a hint of skepticism in the auditory imagination. The reader/listener is warned to be vigilant, though the speaker says nothing here that is directly critical of the Center.

III

Bud was not a heartless killer. He did his best not to kill, if I am to believe his story. He was weak and vain—like most of us. He had done a bit of thieving first, not anything however to compare with the operations of our illustrious industrial magnates, our bankers, politicians and colonial exploiters. No, Bud was just an ordinary crook, an honest crook, so to speak, with an exaggerated sense of loyalty and honor. Toward the fair sex he was fatuously romantic and chivalrous, far more so than a pugilist or sex-starved member of the clergy. There were two things he could not countenance—cruelty to children and disrespect for woman. He was adamant there.

He would never shoot a man down except in self-defense, he said, and I believe him. There was a bit of the dandy about him, and of the swashbuckling braggart too, traits which we find among the higher-ups as well. He was a consummate liar, but then what is a diplomat, a politician, a lawyer? The worst thing about him, and I am trying to look at him dispassionately, is that he no longer had any faith in his fellow man. That had been knocked out of him by those who talk about having faith and never show the evidences of it. He had done at least five stretches and was probably wanted by the authorities when our paths met.

He had paid for his crimes in full, that is my belief. If he should commit fresh ones I would blame it on the police, on the lawmakers, on the educators, on the clergy, on all those who believe in punishment, who refuse to help a man when he is down or try to understand him when in impotent rage he turns

against the world. It doesn't matter to me what crimes are chalked up against Clausen; our crimes, all of us who are on the outside, who got off scot-free, are greater. If we did not actually force him to become a criminal we most certainly helped him to remain one. And in speaking of Bud Clausen I am speaking for the great majority of men and women who suffered the same fate; I am speaking for all those to come, who will follow in his foot-steps and who have no redress until we on the outside become more enlightened and more humane.

—Henry Miller, *The Air-Conditioned Nightmare*

Commentary

This message, more than the others, depends for its effect on variety in the length of sentences and on rhythm. The insistent comparisons are part of the substance of what is said and are obvious aids in the establishment of a voice and an attitude. Less obvious is the speaker's early preference for short sentences and longer sentences made up of short phrases, with consequently heavy internal punctuation. Many of the sentences are made up of series or of appositives and other qualifiers (sometimes both). The effect is that of a speaker making a deliberate effort to be fair toward his subject and toward his reader and at the same time trying to control his discomfort with those who make up ordinary society– the hypocrites whom he cannot at times refrain from listing.

As the passage progresses, the rhythms of the sentences change. At the end of the second paragraph are a couple of emphatic sentences (the next to last heavily ironic) without internal punctuation, and the second sentence in the second paragraph, though it starts as a conditional with a number of items in series, ends with a relative clause that gains emphasis from its very lack of qualification or punctuation—a lack which forces the reader to hear the clause without stopping and particularly to notice the intensity with which it is uttered. The final sentence emphasizes the intensity of the speaker's convictions with two relative clauses —one short, the other much longer—underlining the plight of the speaker's subjects and the speaker's call for people to become "more enlightened and more humane." The warmth and urgency of the voice here contrast with the satiric irony, even the sportiveness, that accompanies the speaker's more detached analysis in the early part of the passage.

Writers' voices change within works (as the passage from Miller shows) and they change from work to work, and so the features that establish the voice in a given passage cannot be reliably extended to characterize the whole of a work, let alone the output of an author, though I sense that different works by the authors cited might well show some of the same features of voice as the passages cited. Our heuristic would need to be able to recognize and explain changes in the voices we hear and the feelings we experience. I have a hunch that we could arrive at a heuristic with this capability.

This heuristic would have to be quite sensitive, as I think the passages just cited will show. It could not be content to deal with mannerisms of language, with dominant metaphorical fields, favored rhetorical schemes, insistent rhythmic patterns, or variations in level of usage—though it would have to take account of all of these. The heuristic would also have to take note of what I think Richard Ohmann has referred to as a writer's "epistemic choices" and of the writer's habitual ways of seeing and comparing, the ways in which his mind moves over his material (I am convinced that the reflection in language of these habits of mind does characterize a person we hear). It would have to take account of the connections a writer makes among diverse parts of experience in the process of creating new rhetorical wholes.

It may seem here that I have gone beyond the features of a text that establish a voice, into the entire region of stylistic analysis. It may be that I have. But that broadening of focus is justifiable, I think, because the study of style in rhetoric has not up to now—so far as I am aware of its development—been adequately concerned with the reader's auditory experience of a text. Rhetoric has not dealt sufficiently with the dramatic encounter between reader and text that, because what the reader hears shapes his or her perception of the text, is properly called a *transaction*. I think that the study of rhetoric needs to give more attention to this auditory experience and to the resulting transaction. Giving that kind of attention will help to account for the reactions we intuitively have, I believe, to the different authors we read.

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TOWARD A RHETORIC OF TRANSCENDENCE

Undoubtedly one of the central commonplaces in contemporary thought is the concept of *Nothing* or void, generally thought of as a yawning abyss where man submits himself to a world of non-experience, an existence of non-being. Whether it manifests itself through silence, absence, or with an interruption of sense perceptions, it asserts a state of vacancy with a cosmic *locus*. Pascal experiences the blank impersonal silence in starry vacancies, and Mallarme perceives void as *azur*. In recent years John Cage has astounded concert audiences with a piano sonata consisting solely of four minutes and thirty-three seconds of silence. Similar vacuums created by the subtraction of intellectual context is nowhere more evident than in the work of Faulkner, where the void left by the absence of central characters creates a vortex around which other characters revolve. In other instances, the void is psychic in nature. Instead of having a *locus* in the external world, it has its origin in the mind. Frost describes the voids in the mind as "desert places." Hopkins imagines the mind a landscape of mountains—"cliffs of Fall/Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed." And then there is St. John of the Cross and the "dark night of the soul," in which a contemplative fixation upon a point within oneself produces an inner emptying of the conscious self.

To these experiences man generally responds with revulsion, for the void sterilizes the environment. It paralyzes man's will; it leaves him a defenseless creature at the mercy of an immense silent vacancy. To this anguished state man succumbs with cries of protest—or else quiet indignation. On the other hand, the void need not destroy the coherence of the cosmos, and it is not necessary that man sink into an abyss. It is possible for man to approach the void with exaltation. By purging himself of all earthly associations, he can annihilate the physical world around him and reshape it to his own desire. Instead of acting as a negative force, the void now becomes a desirable goal. Man transcends the phenomenal world

and surrenders his will to the infinite dimensions of the void. By ecstatically embracing the void in this manner, man in effect transfigures Nothing into Everything.

Indeed, there are as many voids and reactions as there are people and situations. Whatever man's response to void, whatever the causative agent—be it social, psychological, or philosophical—man has given the void a major place in contemporary thought. Its very presence raises questions about man's moral and ethical behavior. At the same time its persistent occurrence indicates that it fulfills or is made to fulfill some need in man's temperament, to respond to some artistic or dialectical need. Whatever the reason for this preoccupation with voids, the notion is harbored and recurs only because it can somehow be turned to account.

Admittedly, in the hands of the artist, the void has been turned to account. It is used to express metaphysical concerns, but more importantly it is also a trope. In this form the void is not a thing in itself but an imagistic vehicle whereby the artist can verify or communicate an idea or an emotion. Thus, in terms of its rhetorical function as an instrument of communication, the void is conceived as a material projection, a visual portrait of a state of mind. Or to use Eliot's term, it is an objective correlative, wherein a symbolic presentation makes an invisible experience visible. In this relation the void may be used as a symbolic equivalent for any number of experiences, but one of the most successful and frequent appearances of void as objective correlative occurs when the artist wishes to present a transcendent view of love. Nowhere is this rhetorical use of the void more readily apparent than in the *Liebestod*, or love-death, motif. As exemplified by Wagner in *Tristan und Isolde* (1865), the *Liebestod* motif is an artistically structured action designed to communicate extreme passion. Because the motif is employed as a means to an end, it is to be taken not as a literal representation but as a symbolic embodiment of emotion. To achieve this goal, the artist develops a scene to vivify the motif. He places lovers within a social milieu which demands adherence to values that conflict with their desires. Like Tristan and Isolde, the lovers, intimidated by a bondage to societal mores, attempt to restrain their passion. They believe in the nobility of their love, and yet they also feel shame and remorse. Frustrated by their need to honor their commitments to society and also to maintain their own integrity, they find their self-control weakening; and in one moment of desperation, they yield to the irresistible tides of passion flooding up from the unconscious. At this point, the lovers experience a loss of self,

or in other terms, a death of self. Consequently, as their perception of the phenomenal world and self recedes from consciousness, their inner world expands into infinite dimensions. The lovers plunge into this illimitable void with orgiastic delight. In this transcendent state they are set free from the debilitating shackles of traditional moral and ethical codes. For a moment, the lovers live a heightened existence in a world which has an innocence and serenity that is suggestive of the traditional Buddhist Nirvana or the Christian Heaven. When the magical spell dissipates, however, the lovers return to the phenomenal world chastened and ennobled. Through a fusion of the noble and the base, of the conscious and the unconscious, their personalities undergo a transformation. Now the lovers know harmony. Purged of remorse and guilt, they know the joy of the "everlasting yea" that results from a death of self. But once they become conscious of the mundane world again, the transcendent void becomes increasingly precious; and like Tristan and Isolde, the lovers, now armed with a new sense of harmony, may actually seek death. Only in death, they feel, can they be free of the "mind-forged manacles" of man; only in death can they know the wholeness of total psychic integration.*

Because of the psychological associations as well as the symbolic and mythic dimensions inherent in the *Liebestod* motif, the artist's decision to use the motif as a vehicle to convey the intensity of passion seems a natural choice. Certainly, the frequent recurrence of it in modern literature attests to its rhetorical adaptability. One significant appearance of the motif occurs in the climactic scene of Edith Wharton's *Ethan Frome* (1911), the scene in which Ethan and Mattie attempt suicide. At the beginning of the scene, Ethan and Mattie trace the growth of their relationship, noting how through "inarticulate flashes" they have stumbled upon "happiness as if they had surprised a butterfly in the winter woods" (New York: Scribner's, 1970, p. 154). Leaving behind now the chaos and bitterness of Zenobia's world, they enter into a strange intimacy, at once languorous and still: "the breeze fell and a warm stillness seemed to drop from the branches with the dropping needles" (p. 152). For

*For the basic concept of void and its relation to the *Liebestod* motif, I owe a great debt to Robert Martin Adams' *Nil: Episodes in the Literary Conquest of Void During the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966).

the first time they give in to the "sweetness" of the new reality. As darkness descends upon them, "dropping down like a black veil from the heavy hemlock boughs" (p. 158), Ethan and Mattie sense a dissociation from Starkfield. Under the protective influence of darkness, inhibitions give way. Free and high above the town, they hear the faint sounds of bells and the cries of children, but these sounds do not infringe upon their intimacy. Suddenly Ethan and Mattie yield to the commanding power within them. The impact of this moment of surrender is manifested metaphorically in the downhill sled ride. As Wharton describes it, "the sled started with a bound, and they flew on through the dusk, gathering smoothness and speed as they went, with the hollow night opening out below them and the air singing by like an organ" (p. 162). From a psychological point of view, the initial release from awareness of self creates a momentary disorientation; then a kind of euphoria comes with an acceptance of the situation.

This brief action illustrates the interplay between the *Liebestod* motif as *vehicle* and as *tenor*. As vehicle the motif consists of a physical action, the downhill ride on the sled. As tenor the motif conveys the affective state experienced during the moment of surrender, a state in which a transcendent consciousness momentarily replaces consciousness of the phenomenal world. To reveal the character of this psychic change, the motif employs a structured action which connotes the progressive states of psychic awareness: (1) a sense of separation from society, (2) a sense of isolation or exclusiveness, (3) a loss or dissolution of self-identity, (4) a fusion with the infinite, (5) a state of exaltation. The resultant death of self reveals the ecstatic stillness which lies at the heart of surrender to passion. This euphoria, however, is short-lived, for soon there comes a return to phenomenal reality, representing a sixth and final phase of the process.

The circularity of the experience is borne out by the behavior of Ethan and Mattie once the run is complete. When the sled reaches the bottom of the hill, Ethan and Mattie discover that the stillness of the transcendent void has vanished. Thrust back into the world of Starkfield, they become agitated. Out of desperation Mattie flings her arms about Ethan: "Her lips, groping for his, swept over his face, and he held her fast in a rapture of surprise" (p. 164). Thereupon Mattie impulsively suggests a double suicide in order that they might be together forever. As Ethan ponders the possibility, he sees the house he has to return to, "the stairs he would have to go up every night, . . . the woman who would wait for him

there" (p. 166). Overwhelmed by this abhorrent vision, Ethan agrees to another run on the sled. As they push off downhill toward their destination—the tree, which is an emblem of their passion—they submit themselves wholly to the unconscious will.

To convey the psychic character of this experience, Wharton uses again the structured action of the motif. In this particular incidence, the motif also reflects the erotic overtones traditionally adhering to it. To communicate the essential nature of surrender—the *this*ness of the emotion, or its *haecceitas*, to borrow Duns Scotus' term—the artist must relate it to a known experience; and since he finds a complement in physical love, he opposes the affective state of consummation to a surrender of the will. This relationship Wharton suggests through the successive waves of esctasy that precede Ethan and Mattie's ascent into the void: "Half-way down there was a sudden drop, then a rise, and after that another long delirious descent. As they took wing for this it seemed to him that they were flying indeed, flying far up into the cloudy night, with Starkfield immeasurably below them, falling away like a speck in space . . . . Then the big elm shot up ahead, lying in wait for them at the bend of the road, and he said between his teeth: 'We can fetch it; I know we can fetch it—'" (p. 169). Ethan, however, cannot maintain the transcendence. Suddenly a vision of Zenobia's face recalls him to phenomenal reality. This brief intrusion diverts his attention only for a second, but it is sufficient to foil the attempt at suicide. For Ethan and Mattie passion is not strong enough to sustain them, but for one brief moment their drab lives have been illuminated by the exaltation of immaculate love.

Although Wharton herself perhaps cannot condone such passion, and thus cannot permit Ethan and Mattie to triumph over the moral strictures of society, she nevertheless has sympathy for their plight. More importantly, she acknowledges a beauty in their passion, and to communicate this resplendence, she relies upon the ability of the *Liesbestod* motif to evoke a positive response from the audience. By appealing to the primordial desire in man for stillness, the motif elicits a response in the audience which in turn urges the sanction of the experience presented.

Wharton, however, is by no means alone in using this motif to express immaculate love and at the same time in using it as a means to persuade an audience to a sacramental view of love. This double function is also particularly evident in D. H. Lawrence's treatment of the motif in *The Rainbow* (1915). Although the motif recurs fre-

quently in this novel, there are several occurrences that are especially noteworthy. The primary one concerns the early relationship between Will Brangwen and his wife Anna. To structure the scene the sexual union, Lawrence follows the sixfold pattern of the motif—separation, exclusion, dissolution, fusion, ecstasy, return. At the beginning Will and Anna sever themselves from society as a "tacit denial of the world." Alone, they sense the loss of inhibitions that comes with the reassuring cover of darkness; Will thinks that he and Anna are "the only inhabitants of the visible earth, the rest were under the flood. And being alone in the world, they were a law unto themselves, they could enjoy and squander and waste like conscienceless gods" (New York: Viking Press, 1968, p. 140). But Will finds the movement toward self-annihilation awesome: "Suddenly, like a chestnut falling out of a burr, he was shed naked and glistening on to a soft, fecund earth, leaving behind him the hard rind of worldly knowledge and experience" (p. 141). With the rind of the ego discarded, Will's naked soul stands before a "living eternity." His room now becomes the *locus* for the void, which Lawrence places at the center of a wheel: "Here at the centre the great wheel was motionless, centered upon itself. Here was a poised, unflawed stillness that was beyond time, because it remained the same, inexhaustible, unchanging, unexhausted" (p. 141). Then as Anna and Will surrender to the voluptuousness of the infinite, they find themselves "beyond the touch of time or change . . . at the very centre of all the slow wheeling of space . . . where there is utter radiance, and eternal being . . . at the heart of eternity, whilst time roared far off, for ever far off" (p. 141).

In an earlier appearance of the motif, Lawrence describes the transcendent state accompanying sexual union as a "baptism" into a new world awaiting discovery: Tom and Lydia Brangwen "had passed through the doorway into the further space, where movement was so big, that it contained bonds and constraints and labours, and still was complete liberty. She was the doorway to him, he to her. At last they had thrown open the doors, each to the other, and had stood in the doorway facing each other, whilst the light flooded out from behind on to each of their faces, it was the transfiguration, glorification, the admission" (p. 91).

Although this apotheosis of Tom and Lydia possesses a grandeur which exceeds the ecstasy experienced by the young Brangwens, Will and Anna's transcendence is no less poignant; and following their return to the phenomenal world, to the "huckster's cries,

the noise of carts, the calling of children," they still possess inner peace: she is like an immaterial spirit, he like "an adventurer on an undiscovered island." Even though Will and Anna yet carry serenity they do not seem to have the ennobled spirit that Tom and Lydia gain as a result of their transfiguration. For Tom and Lydia "the light of the transfiguration burned on in their hearts. He went his way, as before, she went her way, to the rest of the world there seemed no change. But to the two of them, there was the perpetual wonder of the transfiguration" (p. 91).

In a similar manner, Ursula Brangwen also undergoes a transformation of personality. She too is transported into a transcendent void. According to the description of her union with Skrebensky, she "passed away as on a dark wind, far, far away, into the pristine darkness of paradise, into the original immortality" (p. 451); and on her return to mundane reality she feels especially invigorated but is unable to explain the mysterious change that has come over her: "Whither they had gone, she did not know. But it was as if she had received another nature. She belonged to the eternal, changeless place into which they had leapt together" (p. 451). As a result, Ursula also recognizes that sacrifice of self is the essence of personal fulfillment. By surrendering the will she is liberated from the driving force it exerts upon her, and indeed, the multifarious stresses of phenomenal existence, even time and space, are abolished. Released from the manacles fashioned by the ego, she feels, as Tom expresses it, a "strange, inviolable completeness . . . as sure and as stable as God" (p. 42).

The measure of Ursula's attainment is certified by the significance which the language attributes to the experience. Consequently, the ability of the *Liebestod* motif to communicate the immaculateness of passion depends upon the artist's power to construct the correlative in such a way that it will make the audience see with another man's eyes, feel with another man's heart. But given the social and religious attitudes toward love, to get the audience to view the experience without prejudice, the artist must purify desire of the lowly associations imposed by Christianity. To counter these biases, he transports the lovers into a realm free from taint. In addition, this world enhances love by making it mysterious. Undeniably, these factors contribute to the persuasive power of the motif to convey the intensity of immaculate love. On the other hand, it is also possible to communicate the same conception, as Lawrence

does, through the use of words and images generally reserved to express Christian ideas; for by relating physical love to spiritual love, the artist elevates the lesser concept to a plane where it is absolved of its negative connotations. In this manner too, the artist urges the audience toward a new persuasion and toward a different impression of human experience.

If the *Liebestod* motif then may be an instrument to communicate the meaning and power of transcendent love, it may also serve as a means for expressing other experiences which result in the ennobled spirit that comes with sacrifice of self. For example, in Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Stephen Dedalus' seraphic admission into the artistic life in Chapter V is related in terms of the *Liebestod* motif. Thus, by allegorizing feeling, the artist through the agency of the *Liebestod* motif gives shape and significance to one of man's most persistent and essential impulses.

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UP AGAINST THE WALL, MOTHER!

THE RHETORIC OF SLOGANS, CATCHPHRASES, AND GRAFFITI

UP AGAINST THE WALL, MOTHER! "Perhaps nothing upset our enemies more than this slogan," contends Mark Rudd, writing about the Columbia strike in 1968. "To them it seemed to show the extent to which we had broken with their norms, how far we had sunk to brutality, hatred, and obscenity."[1]

The slogan "defines the terms. It puts the administration and the interests they represent on one side, leftist students and the interests of humanity on the other. Those undecided in the middle are forced to choose sides."[2]

These comments by Mark Rudd indicate in part the extent to which slogans, catchphrases, and slogan graffiti were used by protestors, radicals, and ordinary citizens, who often felt themselves to be outside of the decision-making processes of society, to express characteristic positions, issues, feelings, and goals in the 60's and early 70's. Many of these slogans, catchphrases, and graffiti derive from the disturbances at Columbia, San Francisco State, Berkeley, and other universities, from the demonstrations at the Chicago Democratic Convention in 1968, from the civil rights movement of the 60's, and from the Free Speech and war protest movements of that period, but some have their origin in previous and subsequent political and social events.

Because slogans, catchphrases, and slogan graffiti are essentially rhetorical in purpose, because they often deal with significant

social and political issues, and because they sometimes force us to examine more carefully our most cherished attitudes and beliefs, I believe that they are worthy of our serious consideration. In this paper, therefore, I would like to explore the relationships that exist among slogans, catchphrases, and slogan graffiti and to consider their possible significance for the English classroom.

By the phrase *slogan graffiti*, I mean a class of graffiti similar to slogans and catchphrases in form, technique, and rhetorical purpose. Like slogans and catchphrases, slogan graffiti are characterized by conciseness of form, cleverness of phrasing, wit, inventiveness, and pointed observations. In many instances, slogan graffiti are identical to slogans and catchphrases, if we define graffiti in its broadest sense to mean any kind of writing or inscription on a wall or other surface. Thus a slogan or a catchphrase becomes a graffito by virtue of its having been scribbled or scratched on some writing surface.

The word *slogan* comes from the Gaelic word *sluagh-ghairm* meaning a war cry or a rallying cry of a Scottish clan. More recently the word has come to mean a motto or distinctive phrase associated with political parties, radical groups, or advertising agencies. The use of slogans is not confined to these groups alone, however. Almost every element of our society employs slogans: the federal government, labor unions, corporations, professional organizations, schools, churches, the armed services, various kinds of societies, cities, and states. In many ways, slogans resemble mottoes. Like mottoes, they are short and concise, and like mottoes they may express some guiding principle, goal, ideal, aspiration, or exalted sentiment. They differ, however, in that they are often less sententious, more caustic, abusive, evocative, or emotional. Slogans are also closely related to catchwords, or catchphrases as they are sometimes called: concise words or phrases repeated so often that they become representative of some particular political or social point of view.

FORMS

The forms used by the graffitist are very similar to those used by the maker of slogans and catchphrases. Grammatically, the forms are quite simple, consisting of single words and short phrases ("Peace!" "Black power," "Up the establishment!") and concise subject-verb, subject-verb-complement, and verb-complement patterns ("ROTC must go!" 'Impeach Johnson!"). The main functional type is the imperative ("Bring the boys home now!" "Ban the

bomb!" "Legalize marijuana"). The declarative mode is used, but it is used sparingly.

The forms used by the maker of slogans and catchphrases are so easily adaptable to the graffitist's purpose that in most instances all the graffitist has to do is to substitute a word or a phrase or to extend a line slightly to make the needed changes. Thus a single slogan such as "Free Huey Newton" can generate an almost infinite number of imitations: "Free Angela Davis," "Free the Chicago Seven," "Free the Indianapolis 500," "Free Huey—and Dewey and Louie," "Free the Watergate ~~50~~, ~~500~~, 5000." By a slight alteration Patrick Henry's "Give me liberty or give me death" becomes "Give me liberty or give me meth." Once a form is appropriated by the graffitist, it is relatively simple for him to build on the appropriated form. General MacArthur's famous line, "Old soldiers never die; they just fade away," inspired a number of graffiti in the form of parodies: "Old soldiers never die, young ones do," "Old burglars never die; they just steal away," "Old blondes never fade; they just dye away," and "Old mailmen never die; they just lose their zip." Because of the similarity of form, it is easy to recognize the slogans and mottoes embedded in the following graffiti: "Ban the bomb; save the world for conventional warfare," "In God we trust—all others strictly cash," "Serve your country; be a call girl," "Better sick than Bolshevik."

The imperative form of most political and protest slogans is readily appropriated by the graffitist for his own political, social, or satiric purposes as is evident in the following graffiti: "Make love, not babies" (slogan: "Make love, not war"), "Let's all get behind Nixon—and Push" (slogan: "Let's all support ——"), "Remember the alum, Moe" (slogan: "Remember the Alamo"), "Support our boys in the Pentagon" (slogan: "Support our boys in Vietnam"), "Legalize freedom" (slogan: "Legalize abortion," or gambling, or whatever), "Vote 'no' for President" (slogan "Vote ———for President"),"Repeal inhibition" (slogan: "Repeal prohibition").

The rhetorical techniques used by the graffitist are similar to those used by the maker of slogans and catchphrases. Among these, the most important are antithesis, repetition, alliteration, rhyme, and puns.

ANTITHESIS

Antithesis is the juxtaposition of opposing ideas, usually in parallel structure. The rhetorical effect of antithesis is that it forces an adversary to view the issues clearly, in terms of opposing principles. This forcing of issues into rigid antitheses was a technique used by both the radical left and the radical right during the Vietnamese War, as the following examples indicate: "America: Love it or leave it." "America: Change it or lose it." "Make love, not war." "Plant trees, not bombs." The war protestors did not have to search diligently to find suitable models in which to frame their sentiments. The political slogans of recent and bygone years made extensive use of antithesis, as in Patrick Henry's "Give me liberty or give me death," Stephen Decatur's "Our country, right or wrong," and John F. Kennedy's "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." Not all of the antithetical graffiti were cast in the form of an argument. Several were written in the form of a baseball or football score, and their main intent was satiric and ironic, as in the examples, "National Guard: 4; Kent State: 0" or "War: 2,485,321, Peace: 0." If the main weakness of antithesis is that it often reduces complex issues to a very simple form, its strength is that it does not admit of ambiguity.

REPETITION

Another commonly used rhetorical technique in slogans, catchphrases, and slogan graffiti is repetition. Repetition is usually associated with the highest excitement of feeling and emotional intensity, as in the slogans, "Close it down! Close it down!" "Burn, baby, burn." and "Overcome! Overcome!" It can also be used to ridicule and to needle political opponents. Repetition was employed with great effectiveness for just this purpose in the presidential rallies of 1968. Buttons and placards emblazoned with such slogans and slogan graffiti as "Hump the Hump" and "Do it like you did it in '60, Dick" appeared everywhere.

ALLITERATION

A third rhetorical technique frequently used in political slogans, protest slogans, catchphrases, and slogan graffiti is alliteration. Like word repetition or phrase repetition, alliteration emphasizes by concentrating the sense of an idea in sharp and clear outlines. Thus in the slogan "*B*an the *B*omb" and "Screw the System," the meaning becomes more intense and emphatic as a result of the alliteration. Political slogans use alliteration with great skill. Very few deal with concrete issues, but instead invoke a kind of word magic which hypnotizes the voter into believing that he is dealing with

something meaningful. Some slogans focus upon the man rather than upon the issues, as in the examples, "*L*ove that *L*yndon" and *T*ried and *T*rue *T*ruman." Others deal with some abstract principle or goal, as in the slogan, "*P*eace and *P*rosperity" and "*K*orea, *C*ommunism, and *C*orruption!" Like the make of slogans and catchphrases, the graffitist uses alliteration for emphasis ("*N*ixon for *N*othing") but he also uses it for satiric purposes ("*K*ill a *C*ommie for *C*hrist.")

RHYME

A fourth rhetorical technique employed in slogans, catchphrases, and slogan graffiti is rhyme. Rhyme makes a slogan easy to chant, and it condenses a powerful emotional appeal in its repetitive form. The streets resounded to the cries of anti-war slogans such as "Hell no, we won't go!" "Stop the war and feed the poor," and "Hey, hey, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?" in the 60's. Sometimes the rhymes were humorous, as in the graffito "Columbia goes from jerk to jerk—Eisenhower to Grayson Kirk," but mostly they were used to rally people to a particular cause ("Better red than dead," "Gym Crow must go"). The slogan graffiti worked in similar fashion. Some were identical to protest slogans as in the graffito "1, 2, 3, 4—Tricky Dicky stop the war" and were used to directly emphasize anti-war sentiments. Others were used to abuse government officials that protestors believed were responsible for continuing the war ("Nixon in '72; don't stop in the middle of a screw").

PUNS

A fifth rhetorical technique used in slogans, catchphrases, and slogan graffiti is the pun. The pun has both a serious aim and a ridiculous aim. For example, during the 1968 political rallies, puns were used to directly express anti-Humphrey sentiments because of his alignment with Johnson's policies. The play on the word *hump* in the slogans "Hump the Hump" and "Keep the country Hump-free" makes an acerbic, yet comic point. The word *hump* refers to a part of Humphrey's name, but it also has sexual connotations. The use of sexual connotations is also contained in the slogan graffito "Dick Nixon before he dicks you." The pun on the word *dick* alludes to the idea that Nixon is screwing the country. Puns were also used in protest slogans during the Columbia confrontation in 1968. The puns in the slogans "Stop Gym Crow" and "Gym Crow must go" make the satiric point that Columbia is engaging in ethnic discrimination against blacks while at the same time they focus on the immediate issue of the construction of the gym.

In addition to sharing characteristics of form and rhetorical technique, slogans, catchphrases, and slogan graffiti also share a similarity of rhetorical purpose.[3]

POLARIZATION

One purpose is to polarize, to divide people into diametrically opposed, antagonistic groups, emphasizing conflicting or contrasting positions and viewpoints. As Mark Rudd indicates, the slogans put the students on one side and the administration on the other, forcing those in the middle to choose sides. Because many students felt powerless to make changes within the university system or within society, they began to adopt some of the strategies of the civil rights movement of the 60's. Instead of seeking to work for slow, evolutionary changes, they began to demand immediate changes in the structure of a society that they felt was bound up with military, racist, and mercantile interests.

The protest slogans, catchphrases, and slogan graffiti they adopted often translated these controversial issues into words:

Hell no! We won't go!
ROTC must go!
Stop DOW now!
Give peace a chance!
End racism now!
Legalize marijuana!
Stop Columbia from taking over Harlem!

But often these slogans, like the demands, were too general, imprecise, unreasonable, or not clearly understandable to be translatable into action:

Power to the people!
Screw in the streets!
Do your own thing.
Trust your impulses.
Zap the world with love.
Turn on, tune in, drop out.
Be realistic, demand the impossible.
We want the world and we want it now!

The political slogans, like the protest slogans and graffiti, were also used to polarize. For example, some political commentators contend that the reason Goldwater lost the election in 1964 is that he willingly accepted the extremist labels pinned on him by moderates and liberals. One of the key lines in his acceptance speech, "Extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice . . . moder-

ation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue," soon became a sloganizable issue in that campaign, an issue which became so inflammatory that it caused Nelson Rockefeller to label Goldwater's words as "dangerous, irresponsible, and frightening." Nixon himself and his vice-presidential running mate, Spiro Agnew, followed Goldwater's lead by seemingly looking for the right catchwords rather than the right policies. Thus "Law and Order" became one of the catchphrases in the election of 1968, and Agnew's vitriolic attacks on the press, on students, and on the academic establishment served to polarize the country even more.

INVOKING OF VIOLENCE

Another rhetorical purpose of protest slogans, political slogans, catchphrases, and graffiti is to invoke violence by the employment of epithets, obscene language, and invective. As Tom Hayden puts it: "Often the only words with emotional content are those that cannot be spoken or published in the 'legitimate' world: fuck, motherfucker, shit and other 'obscenities.' New words are needed to express feelings: right on, cool, outta sight, freaky. New language becomes a weapon of the Movement because it is mysterious, threatening to conventional power:"[4]

> Up against the wall, mother!
> Off the pigs!
> Freak the delegates!
> Screw the establishment!
> Dick Nixon!
> Hump the Hump

The obscene language and the epithets were obviously used by the radicals for their shock value. It enabled them to attack a system which considers such words taboo, it brought the radicals to the attention of the media, it put into words what they had been thinking in private all along, it provided a kind of catharsis or release of hostile emotions, and it symbolized the fact that the traditional forms of authority had broken down.

Unfortunately, violence begets violence, and the response to the language and provocation of the demonstrators was unrestrained and shocking police violence at the Democratic National Convention in 1968, termed by some commentators "a police riot." Newsmen were reportedly clubbed and sprayed with Mace. An eighteen-year-old girl was reportedly thrown by the police toward the door of a paddy wagon which she hit with a thud. She fell, was picked up, and then thrown again head first into the wagon. When a demonstrator fell to the ground, three or four policemen would start

beating him until he was bloody. The police, like the demonstrators, had their own chants and slogans. In a charge against the barricades in Lincoln Park, they chanted:

Kill! Kill! Kill! Kill!
Kill the mothers!
Kill the bastards!
Knock out their teeth!

Even though there was truth embedded in the rhetoric of the demonstrators, the obscenities and epithets embedded in the slogans proved to be a poor moral equivalent for rational discourse and civilized change.

SOLIDIFICATION

A third rhetorical purpose of protest slogans, political slogans, catchphrases, and graffiti is to unify, to solidify a group into a community of interests and endeavors. Protest slogans and graffiti such as "We shall overcome," "Right on," "Black power," and "All power to the people" not only gave the protestors a sense of solidarity, but also provided them with a sense of identity. This need for a sense of identity is echoed in the plaintive cry of one graffitist, "I am somebody! I am somebody!" These slogans, and the graffiti to which they gave rise, also helped to forge a bond between the protestors and potential allies in the community at large.

The political slogans work in a similar fashion. They give members of a particular party a sense of solidarity and identity. But unfortunately they convince some people to vote for political principles and policies of which they have little knowledge or understanding. For example, just exactly what do such slogans and catchphrases as "The Great Society," "Peace and Prosperity," "Home and Country," "Law and Order," "Save the West for Democracy," and "Bring us together again" really mean? Being against peace and prosperity or home and country or law and order is like being against the flag and motherhood. Rather than condensing the issues into some intelligible form, as some slogans clearly do, these slogans serve rather to obscure the real issues. They are intended to mean all things to all men.

But the graffitist sees through the glibness and superficiality of many slogans and catchphrases. Although his purpose is often similar to that of the protestor or sloganeer, he sometimes appropriates their material for his own purposes: to ridicule, to satirize, or to parody, as in the following examples:

Support relief for the oppressed majority.
Big Brother lives in the White House.
Ad Hoc Committee to draft George Hamilton.
War is good business; invest your son.
Take a Viet Cong to church with you on Sunday.
Fight air pollution. Get Spiro a gag.

The graffitist has put into comic or ironic perspective almost all of the sloganizable issues of the late 60's and early 70's: racism, the draft, the Vietnamese war, the possibility of a nuclear confrontation, drugs, pollution, the economy, and our preoccupation with sex and violence. If, unlike the slogans and catchphrases they so faithfully mirror, graffiti seldom lead to action, they are valuable in attacking hypocrisy and sham and in satirizing individuals and institutions.

Whereas many slogans and catchphrases are so general and abstract as to be practically meaningless to the critical perception (perhaps this is why they are so appealing to the demagogue), graffiti are almost always concrete and specific, although some graffiti do rise to the status of universals (as in the case of the proverbal graffiti). But since the graffitist is often a satirist, he is not afraid to name names, as the following examples indicate:

William F. Buckley for God.
Gore Vidal for fairy queen.
Shriver for something.
Ted Kennedy is a dirty old man.
H. Rap deserves one.
George Wallace is a mulatto.
Ronald Reagan is one peach of a swell fascist.
Barry Goldwater wears pink underwear.
Spiro Agnew drives a Schlitz truck and wears combat boots.

Often, however, the graffitist is more humorous than satirical, as in the following slogan graffiti:

Use erogenous zone numbers.
Hire the morally handicapped.
Conserve water; shower with a friend.
Eat more beans; the country needs the gas.
Help the energy crisis—stop fueling around.
Save a tree; take Ewell Gibbons to lunch.
Support "National Motherhood Week"; make one today.
Help retard children; support our schools.

I think it should be evident from these examples that political slogans, protest slogans, catchphrases, and graffiti have much in

common and that they deserve serious study. When they deal with specific and recognizable issues, they can be implicitly a force for social change. But if they are taken merely at their face value, they can easily become a substitute for analytical thinking and serious argument, thus preventing meaningful debate.

Slogans, catchphrases, and graffiti can have a variety of uses in the classroom. Because they are a source of contemporary social and political satire, they can be used to teach satire. Because they contain a great variety of forms, stylistic techniques, and purposes, they can be used to teach grammatical and rhetorical form, rhetorical technique, and rhetorical purpose. Finally, because they use the language of the man in the street, they can be used to teach usage, including slang, jargon, epithets, neologisms, dialect variations, and idioms. Whatever graffiti may have been in the 40's and 50's, today they are literate, witty, and urbane and worthy of our serious attention.

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NOTES

[1]Mark Rudd, "Symbols of the Revolution," in *Up Against the Ivy Wall*, Jerry L. Avorn and members of the staff of the *Columbia Daily Spectator* (New York: Atheneum, 1969), p. 291.

[2]Rudd, p. 292.

[3]The general discussion of rhetorical purpose and the categories of polarization, invoking of violence, and solidification are based on the following sources: John Waite Bowers and Donovan J. Ochs, *The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc., 1971), pp. 16-38, 57-71; Irving J. Rein, "The Confrontation Strategy," *Rudy's Red Wagon* (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1972), pp. 33-45.

[4]Tom Hayden, *Trial* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 39.

THE THREE R's: READING, READING, AND RHETORIC

Any theory of literary criticism states or at the very least (and more usually) implies a theory of reading. It should be illuminating, then, to examine prominent movements in criticism from the standpoint of what we have learned, in roughly the last ten years, about the phenomenon of reading. Freed from the limitations of structuralist-behaviorist theory, psycholinguistics of the "mentalistic" transformational-generative school has made a quantum leap in explaining what happens when a visual system mediates between strange black squiggles and a receptor mind in the process of deriving meanings. Insofar as a theory of criticism contradicts what we know to be the case in reading, that theory must be faulty; on the other hand, reading theory can verify some of criticism's hermeneutic, exegetical techniques and procedures. In general, it turns out to be the case that reading theory almost always illuminates critical theory, and often critical theory illuminates reading theory. (In order to cut down on awkward verbiage, I will henceforth use *criticism* to mean *critical theory* and *psycholinguistics* to denote *reading theory*.

Before I undertake to map out the correspondence between criticism and psycholinguistics and before I elaborate the second premise of this discussion (that critical theory is usually nothing more than fragmented rhetorical theory), I would like to pause long enough to illustrate what I mean concerning the relationship between criticism and psycholinguistics.

It is virtually a dogma of modern criticism that all literature is ironic, must be ironic to qualify as literature. And part of the

irony arises from texture, which is, in effect, the intractability that arises from the conflict of matter with manner, the tension between what is being said and the way in which that content is expressed. As Robert Penn Warren (only one among a great number that could be cited) puts it: "Can we make any generalizations about the nature of the poetic structure? First, it involves resistances, at various levels. There is the tension between the rhythm of the poem and the rhythm of speech . . . between the formality of the rhythm and the informality of the language; between the particular and the general, the concrete and the abstract; between the elements of even the simplest metaphor . . . the poet is like the jiujitsu expert; he wins by utilizing the resistance of his opponent—the materials of the poem. In other words, a poem, to be good, must earn itself. It is a motion toward a point of rest, but if it is not resisted motion, it is motion of no consequence."[1] In effect, a poem has *texture*, which arises from the various resistances inherent in the nature of the art.

Psycholinguistics is extremely useful in clarifying the irony of poetic structure.

It is axiomatic that the reader employs three cue systems in the process of deriving meaning; in the jagon, these are the *grapho-phonic, syntactic,* and *semantic systems.*[2] Each of the cue systems demands brief explanation.

To be sure, there is a correspondence between the graphic system of the poem as written and the phonic system of the reader's spoken dialect. So much goes without saying. It is obvious, however, that there is not a letter-by-letter correspondence, for a word such as *phthistic* contains only five phonemes: roughly/tizik/. Not so obvious, but hardly astounding, is the fact that proficient readers derive meanings from graphemes, not phonemes. That is, meaning is derived from the configuration on the page without the mediation of sound. This is a well-established principle of psycholinguistics.[3] Even though there is a grapho-phonic correspondence between the written and the spoken versions of a text, in non-esthetic reading that correspondence is ignored, and the reader proceeds directly from the graphemic system to meaning. And here I will stress the difference between what I call *nonesthetic* and *esthetic* reading, a point that I will clarify in a moment.

The function of the syntactic cue system is obvious. There is all the difference in the world between *Man bites dog* and *Dog bites man.* Furthermore, the syntactic system determines the parts of speech that can fill various slots in a sentence. In the sequence DOG BITES ____, the empty slot can be filled only by a nominal or

an adverbial. Thus much is obvious. Equally obvious is the principle of accessibility, that is, the relative difficulty or ease with which meaning can be derived from a sentence. Both

(1) The child tossed up the ball which its father put down.

and

(2) The child tossed the ball which its father put down up.

are perfectly grammatical, but (1) is clearly more accessible than (2). It goes without saying that the less accessible version of any sentence is more *visible* than the more accessible version. Grammatical distortions, as in Cummings, are maximally *visible*, call attention to themselves as structures. In nonesthetic reading, the optimal condition is invisibility of syntax.

Meaning in a sentence is not, of course, a mere 1 plus 1 plus 1 sum of its parts, a principle that is easily illustrated by the fact that no one is really uncertain about the meaning of the following: Last month we flew to New York in a____. (I think there are only two words that will fill the slot, *plane* and *jet*, and they are virtually semantic equivalents.) But, in fact, the semantic system of nonpoetic and poetic writings differ in radical and significant ways. Perhaps the best discussion of this difference is by Philip Wheelwright.[4] In literal language, symbols are discrete, univocal, invariant; in expressive language, symbols have iconic significance, are characterized by plurisignation, are given soft focus, are semantic variables which shift their meaning (to some extent) in context. In literal language, the significance of utterances as speech acts is normally definite; utterances are commands, requests, promises, and so on. But in expressive language, *assertorial tone* is softened.[5]

In sum, for maximum efficiency in nonesthetic reading, the grapho-phonic system must be invisible, sentences must be maximally accessible syntactically, and semantics must be *logical* rather than *translogical*, to use Wheelwright's terms.

Much poetry—perhaps most—seems particularly designed to make reading (in the sense of the efficient processing of black squiggles on a page to derive meaning) difficult, if not impossible. Consider what happens in the reading of this stanza from a relatively easy poem:

> There is a Garden in her face,
> Where Rose and White Lillies grow;
> A heav'nly paradice is that place,
> Wherein all pleasant fruits doe flow.
> There Cherries grow which none may buy
> Till Cherry ripe themselves doe cry.

The insistence of rhythm and rhyme makes the grapho-phonic system highly visible; the reader inevitably finds it more or less difficult to keep the phonics of the poem from coming between himself or herself and the meaning, which, as we have said, should emerge without the mediation of sound. Reading a metered and rhymed poem, then, is in a real sense a primitive activity, taking one back in time to the halting period of childhood, when reading was indeed the tortuous process of making enigmatic black squiggles correspond to meaningful sounds. (In the jargon, the reading model GRAPHEME – PHONEME – MEANING is called mediated word identification.)[6]

As to syntax and accessibility, the structure here is relatively straightforward, but clearly the following is more easily read than its original version: "There cherries grow which none may buy until they themselves do cry Cherry ripe." If syntax calls attention to itself, it does not function with maximum efficiency in the unmediated acquisition of meaning through use of the cue system. In other words, once again, the cue system becomes an object, not an instrument.

The translogicality of the semantic system in the stanza is pervasive, and I will comment on it briefly. *Garden* and *cherries* are both metaphoric and iconic. It is almost impossible to assign an exact meaning to *pleasant fruits*. And so on.

Here, then, is a great irony: the expressive language of poetry is not efficient language. A Coleridgean metaphor comes to mind: the language of poetry is like a pane of glass textured by frost which partially blocks the vision and which calls attention to itself as an object worth contemplating. This irony of texture is precisely—though not completely—explicable in terms of how the cue system works in the psycholinguistic process called reading.

The purpose of the foregoing was to give immediate demonstration of a principle: that it is productive to consider criticism from the viewpoint of psycholinguistics. Now I would like to become more general in my survey and to introduce the notion of rhetorical criticism.

In the first chapter of *The Mirror and the Lamp*, M. H. Abrams gives a concise and brilliant outline of critical viewpoints, which, as everyone recalls, fall into four categories: mimetic, expressive, pragmatic, and objective. Mimetic theory, viewing the poem as a mirror of reality, stresses the ratio between the poem and *reality* or *truth*. Expressive theory, viewing the poem as an expression of the

poet, stresses the ratio between the poem and the poet. Pragmatic theory, viewing the poem as it affects a reader, stresses the ratio between the poem and the reader. And objective theory, viewing the poem as a unique artifact with its own ontological status, solipsistically implies a ratio between the poem and itself. Singleminded focus and close attention to the text bring the poem into being and create its value.

Schematically, then, we have the *mimetic ratio*: poem-reality; the *expressive ratio*: poem-poet; the *pragmatic ratio*: poem-reader; and the *objective ratio*: poem-poem. It must be said emphatically that seldom does an individual critic or school remain *pure*. Nonetheless, the four categories are a roughly accurate way of placing critics and schools; more important, the categories are a productive heuristic, as will be seen.

Out of context, statements that purely represent all of the viewpoints are easy to come by.

Mimetic

> Tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude. . . .—Aristotle

Expressive

> Poetry, in a general sense, may be defined to be "the expression of the imagination"; and poetry is connate with the origin of man. Man is an instrument over which a series of external and internal impressions are driven, like the alterations of an ever-changing wind over an Aeolian lyre, which move it by their motion to ever-changing melody. But there is a principle within the human being, and perhaps within all sentient beings, which acts otherwise than in the lyre, and produces not melody alone, but harmony, by an internal adjustment of the sounds or motions thus excited to the impressions which excite them.
>
> —Shelley

Pragmatic

> . . . as virtue is the most excellent resting place for all worldly learning to make his end of, so poetry, being the most familiar to teach it, and most princely to move towards it, in the most excellent work is the most excellent workman.—Sidney

Objective

> . . . most of the distempers of criticism come about from yielding to the temptation to take certain remarks which we make ***about*** the poem—statements about what it says or about what

truth it gives or about the formulations it illustrates—for the essential core of the poem itself.—Cleanth Brooks

Granted that these out-of-context statements quite unfairly represent the extremes of the four viewpoints, nonetheless there is a tendency for critics and criticism to emphasize one or the other and thus to become reductive. To demonstrate this reductiveness—and to make an essay toward a different kind of criticism—I would like now to turn back to psycholinguistics and to introduce the concept of discourse that is traditional in rhetoric. In other words, I want to survey critical theory in the light of psycholinguistics and rhetoric. In order to do this, I will construct two bare-bones schemata, one of rhetoric and one of the psycholinguistic phenomenon of reading.

Ignoring memory and delivery, we can say that the traditional body of rhetoric consists of three departments: invention, arrangement, and style. In turn, invention consists of three elements: *logos* (or reasonableness), *ethos* (or the character of the speaker), and *pathos* (or the nature of the audience). This age-old scheme is not to be written off lightly, and perhaps its usefulness is no better illustrated than by demonstrating how it, in its totality, fits with the fragmented view of discourse presented by critical theory.

Critical Viewpoint	Ratio	Correspondence to Rhetoric
Mimetic	poem-reality	logos
Expressive	poem-poet	ethos
Pragmatic	poem-reader	pathos
Objective	poem-poem	arrangement, style

This chart is, of course, simple enough, but it is also dramatic. It demonstrates the holistic, synthetic nature of rhetoric and the fragmented nature of literary criticism. Hereafter we will discuss the implications of the chart more thoroughly.

The axioms of psycholinguistic theory are a productive heuristic for thinking about critical theory. First, one hardly needs proof that by far the most important factor in the phenomenon of reading is the perceiving mind with all its limitations, its emotional sets, its reservoir of past experience. In fact, it is empirically demonstrable that the amount of information a skilled reader derives from a text is amazingly small. In general, "There is a limited-capacity short-term memory that creates a bottleneck in the transmission of

visual information to the comprehension processes of the brain; therefore, it is essential that the brain provide more information from its side of the eyeballs than the eyes pick up from the page."[7] Psycholinguists talk about the magic number 7 plus or minus two: short-term memory is capable of holding only between five and nine bits of information. A *bit* is a piece of information that reduces uncertainty by one-half. For instance, if I am holding a card from an ordinary deck and ask you to name the suit, you will need two bits of information to do so. First bit: "Is the card black?" (I answer, "No." You are now certain that the card is red.) Second bit: "Is the card a heart?" (I answer, "No." You are now certain that the card is a diamond.)

Second, we obviously derive meanings that are somehow independent of the words that originally carried them. If I were to ask you to tell me what I have said so far, I would think you mad—and be convinced you are an idiot savant—if you quoted what I have so far written word-for-word. Obviously, whole texts—poems, articles, novels—have deep and surface structures, just as sentences do.

Third, reading is a process of *scanning*, *predicting*, *testing*, and *confirming*.[8] It is simply demonstrable that close reading during initial contact with the text reduces one's ability to derive meaning. During the first contact, the closer the reading, the less the meaning derived. (I am not arguing against ultimate close reading.) Or another perspective: ". . . the perception of serial displays has three stages: *scanning*, to form a schema; *ordering* of the schematic elements; and *impleting* or filling in of the schematized but ordered items."[9] And if you have now picked up my cues and have begun to think about the New Criticism as a theory of impletion, you are on the right track.

All of the foregoing has, in fact, been prefatory to the main thrust of this paper. The preface having been gracefully danced through, we can now begin to saw wood.

Mimetic theory implies that the meaning *in here* in the poem somehow corresponds to a truth or a reality *out there* in the universe beyond the poem. The mimetic critic typically asks, "Is the poem true? Is it verisimilar?" In these questions is implied a system of values. If the answer is yes, the poem is *good*. In other words, as the schema that was developed some pages back would indicate, mimetic theory is concerned with what rhetoricians call *logos*. Here is Yvor Winters: "The theory of literature which I defend in

these essays is absolutist. I believe that a work of literature, in so far as it is valuable, approximates a real apprehension and communication of a particular kind of objective truth . . . . The poem is good in so far as it makes a defensible rational statement about a given human experience (the experience need not be real but must be in some sense possible) and at the same time communicates the emotion which ought to be motivated by the rational understanding of that experience."[10]

In regard to *logos*, it turns out that poetics and psycholinguistics are of great help to rhetoric. We are dealing essentially with the question, "What is the meaning of meaning?" In the essay "Myth, Fiction, and Displacement" from *Fables of Identity*, Northrop Frye argues that as we are reading fiction, we are directly concerned with continuity, but after we have read, we lose sight of and interest in sequaciousness. Our knowledge is of what is generally called *theme*, and theme consists of *subject*, *allegory* (Hamlet personifies indecision, for instance), and *mythos*, which is the work "as a simultaneous unity, when the entire shape of it is clear in our minds." It is *dianoia*. (One might say that *dianoia* is the deep structure, and Frye does argue that the same *mythos* can have various surface realizations.) Frye says, ". . . because myths are stories, what they 'mean' is inside them, in the implications of their incidents. No rendering of any myth into conceptual language can serve as a full equivalent of its meaning. . . . its life is always the poetic life of a story, not the homiletic life of some illustrated truism." Naturalism and realism are just indirect mythologizing, to which Frye applies the term *displacement*. "Literary shape cannot come from life; it comes only from literary tradition, and so ultimately from myth."[11]

The mystique of contextualism, as in Eliseo Vivas and Murray Krieger, deals interestingly and productively with meaning in a way not too far removed from Northrop Frye. In summary, the contextualists argue something like this: In the world *out there* are unformed, inchoate ideas floating in and forming the stream of experience. These can become the materials of poetry—the *substance*. The poet shapes these materials through the form of the poem, gives them *insistence* and hence more than merely inchoate being. Through the insistence of the poem, these materials gain *existence* and become cultural artifacts.[12] The poem itself *means* as what Krieger calls a *reductive metaphor*. As he explains,

> The repetitive patterns of a work, which give stillness to the movement by freezing freedom, must be read by the critic into his hypothesis of the work's form, as he makes it a reductive metaphor—an emblem, a constitutive symbol—for all the moving life and liveliness of the work. The metaphor, while excluding so much of the middle in its reductive, extremist purity, is in its emblematic fullness at the same time all-inclusive.[13]

So far, so good. Both Frye and Krieger are telling us in their own ways that meaning has an independence of the text, and this only makes sense: you and I can meaningfully talk about the meaning of *Hamlet*, but we certainly could not recite the text, beyond a few of the soliloquies which have become set pieces. But in their discussions of meaning, Frye and Krieger, like most critics, keep their eyes too firmly focused on the poem-reality ratio which characterizes mimetic statements. (I am not necessarily saying that Frye and Krieger are mimetic critics.) For Frye, the ultimate reality is myth, while for Krieger, interestingly enough, the ultimate reality is the poem.

As a rhetorical-psycholinguistic corrective to critical discussions of meaning, I propose the following:

> . . . all perception might be regarded as a process of decision-making based on significant differences detected in the environment. The actual nature of the significant differences is not determined by the physical events themselves, but by the perceiver's rules for distinguishing those events that he wishes to treat as functionally equivalent from those that he wishes to treat as different. Events to be treated as equivalent will be allocated to the same cognitive category, which is specified by the rules that are represented in its feature lists. In other words, the perceiver brings a highly structured knowledge of the world into every perceptual situation. Rather than saying that he discovers order and regularities that are properties of the environment, it is more appropriate to say that the perceiver imposes his own organization upon the information that reaches his receptor systems. The organization of his knowledge of the world lies in the structure of his cognitive categories and the manner in which they are related—in the way the perceiver *partitions* his knowledge of the world.[14]

An account of meaning, then, that does not take the perceiving mind into consideration is only a partial account. In this respect, we are

more satisfied with Frye's conception of the rockbottom mythic nature of literary knowledge than we are with structuralist or contextualist theories of meaning as a function of the text exclusively.

In surveying mimetic criticism as a source for an account of *logos*, we have now argued, on the basis of psycholinguistics and rhetoric, that the mimetic ratio of poem-reality must be expanded to include *pathos*, and our ratio becomes poem-reality-reader. Obviously this expanded ratio is highly rhetorical in nature, for the concept of audience has entered.

In its various manifestations, objective criticism, particularly New Criticism, is deeply anti-expressivist. Wimsatt and Beardsley's classic essay "The Intentional Fallacy" comes to mind here, and it is so widely known that it need not be quoted. Expressive criticism, however, is undergoing a renaissance in a variety of quarters, some of which I would like to survey briefly. In their work, J. L. Austin and John Searle have begun to work out a grammar of expressivism, in effect arguing that without intention, any language is meaningless.[15] I am reluctant to explore even the peripheries of speech act theory here, but perhaps some brief illustrations will nail the concept down sufficiently. If you think about a sentence such as "Could you raise the window?" you will realize that, even though it is interrogative in form, it is ambiguous until you can supply an intention. The sentence is either a yes/no question or a request. In other words, your supplying an intention is not a fallacy at all, but a necessity.

Walter Ong argues movingly that "all words projected from a speaker remain, as has been seen, somehow interior to him, being an invitation to another person, another interior, to share the speaker's interior, an invitation to enter in, not to regard from the outside."[16] And, of course, Wayne Booth's fascinating *A Rhetoric of Irony* is largely an argument in behalf of the intentional fallacy.

In dealing with mimetic theory, we argued that the ratio had to be expanded from poem-reality to poem-reality-reader, else the criticism would fall short of its pretensions to explain and evaluate works of literature. Expressive criticism, from the Romantics onward (indeed, from Plotinus onward), has stressed the poem-poet ratio. Can we not productively combine mimetic and expressive theory to arrive at a poem-reality-reader-poet ratio? If we do this, we are coming even nearer to what might be called rhetorical criticism, for we have introduced the concept of *ethos*. In fact, however, our own intuition as well as tradition tells us that rhetorical criticism and literary criticism are different sorts of activities. The

nature of the difference becomes clear when we take the pragmatic and the objective viewpoints toward texts.

Blatantly Marxist, gay, or feminist criticism is often representative of pragmatism at its most raucous and least interesting, but to claim that there is not a pragmatics of literature is to deny that literature has an effect. Once again, Northrop Frye can help us. In his terms, the imaginative world of literature is virtually the short-stopping of action, of strictly pragmatic results: "So we begin to see where the imagination belongs in the scheme of human affairs. It's the power of constructing possible models of human experience. In the world of imagination, anything goes that's imaginatively possible, but nothing really happens. If it did happen, it would move out of the world of imagination and into the world of action."[17] Thus the use of literature is to construct a vision of the possible, not to effect the actual.

One of the great shortcomings of modern psycholinguistic theory in reading is its pragmatic nature, viewing reading as the processing of information to bring about understanding, which is defined as the reduction of uncertainty: "Reading is an act of communication in which information is transferred from a transmitter to a receiver, whether the reader is a scholar deciphering a medieval text or a child identifying a single letter on a blackboard. Because of this basic nature of reading, there are insights to be gained from the study of theories of communication and information; there are concepts that are particularly useful for the construction of a theory of reading, and a terminology that can be employed to increase the clarity of its expression."[18] This language, which represents the thrust of reading theory and the mental sets of the theorists, can be significantly influenced by a corrective from literary criticism. What the critics realize and describe again and again is an experience that I call *esthetic immersion*. What I mean by esthetic immersion has been stated again and again by critic after critic, for anyone who reads imaginative literature passionately has had the experience. This experience of reading has never, I think, been more beautifully described than by Sartre, and I will quote him in lieu of compiling a chrestomathy or of compounding words:". . . the characteristic of aesthetic consciousness is to be a belief by means of commitment, by oath, a belief sustained by fidelity to one's self and to the author, a perpetually renewed choice to believe. I can awaken at every moment, and I know it; but I do not want to; reading is a free dream . . . reading is an exercise in generosity; and what the writer requires of the reader is not the application of an abstract

freedom but the gift of his whole person, with his passions, his prepossessions, his sympathies, his sexual temperament, and his scale of values."[19] In other words, esthetic reading is a passionate exchange in freedom between an author and a reader. Freedom being mankind's greatest good, the value of reading lies in the exchange of freedom.

Whether or not we are moved by Sartre's dithyramb, we must admit that in some sense esthetic reading is less purposeful than nonesthetic reading. The pragmatics of esthetic reading involve immersion; the pragmatics of nonesthetic reading stress the acquisition of information *for some use*.

Meaning is, of course, independent of reference, but purpose in nonesthetic reading is closely tied to reference; that is, we do frequently read to gain mastery over Reality. Teleologically, then, esthetic reading is radically different from nonesthetic reading, and, as we all know, the experiences themselves differ. The pragmatics of esthetic reading are anti-pragmatic.

The anti-pragmatic nature of esthetic reading has been dealt with most extensively by objective critics. You will recall that at the beginning of this discussion we developed a long digression concerning the cue system in reading and the nature of poetic texture. The concept of texture is, of course, one of the major ideas in objective criticism. In general the objectivists explore the ontological status of the poem. Of particular significance are structure and style.

In nonesthetic reading, structure and style achieve, as I have pointed out, a certain invisibility that they do not have in esthetic reading. The objective critic—in his attempt at purity—views the poem as an esthetic structure, but the interpretation of *structure* here must be broad enough to allow for the totality of the imaginative construct, from the prosody of a sonnet to what Percy Lubbock called (as I paraphrase him) "the shadowy and phantasmal form of the novel."

As far as they go, the great objectivists—Brooks, Warren, Tate, Ransom—are perfectly right. Structure, texture, irony, tension, ambiguity—these do constitute a good deal of what we point to when we differentiate poetry from rhetoric. The objectivists, however, as psycholinguists might point out to them, have a strange notion of that highly personal idiosyncratic receptor, the brain, which cannot lobotomize itself at will and exclude its intuition that someone did

have a motive for writing this poem, that this novel does bear on the facts of American history, that that play is uncannily near to the viewer's actual experience.

In other words, criticism must be rhetorical criticism in that it takes account of *logos*, *pathos*, *ethos*, structure, and style. In fact, critical logomachies are largely the result of the failure to place the study of literature within a holistic framework such as that provided by rhetoric.

In this paper, there are many problems that I have not dealt with—the persona of the narrator, for instance. What I have tried to suggest is simple enough. Literary criticism deals with reading, either implicitly or explicitly, and reading is the process of deriving meaning from written discourse. It should be the case, then, that literary criticism would shed light on reading theory and vice versa. I hope that I have demonstrated as much. Furthermore, I have argued that rhetoric—transformed at crucial points—is a vital corrective for the fragmentation of literary criticism. It seems to me that literary studies are vital to rhetoric, but even more so, rhetoric is vital to literature, for the field has a robustness that can be a healthy corrective for the effeteness of some—perhaps most—literary studies.

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NOTES

[1]Robert Penn Warren, "Pure and Impure Poetry," *Critical Theory Since Plato*, ed. Hazard Adams (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971), p. 991.

[2]Kenneth S. Goodman, "Psycholinguistic Universals in the Reading Process," in *Psycholinguistics and Reading*, ed. Frank Smith (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), p. 25.

[3]See, for instance, Frank Smith, "Decoding: The Great Fallacy," *Psycholinguistics and Reading*, pp. 70-83.

[4]Philip Wheelwright, "The Logical and the Translogical," in *Critical Theory Since Plato*, pp. 1103-12. (This is Chapter 4 of *The Burning Fountain: A Study in the Language of Symbolism.*)

[5]Wheelwright does not use the term *speech acts*, but he is clearly talking about the principle that Austin and Searle, among others, have explored in detail.

[6]Frank Smith, *Understanding Reading* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), pp. 159-84.

[7]Ibid., p. 69.

[8]Goodman, "Psycholinguistic Universals in the Reading Process," pp. 23-24.

[9]Paul A. Kolers, "Three Stages of Reading," in *Psycholinguistics and Reading*, p. 32.

[10]Yvor Winters, *In Defense of Reason* (Denver: Alan Swallow, 1947), p. 11.

[11]Northrop Frye, "Myth, Fiction, and Displacement," *Fables of Identity* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1963), pp. 21-38 passim.

[12]Eliseo Vivas, "The Objective of the Poem," in *Critical Theory Since Plato*, pp. 1069-77.

[13]Murray Krieger, "Mediation, Language, and Vision in the Reading of Literature," in *Critical Theory Since Plato*, p. 1244.

[14]Smith, *Understanding Reading*, p. 187.

[15]J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962); John R. Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge, Engl.: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

[16]Walter J. Ong, S. J., "A Dialectic of Aural and Objective Correlatives," in *Critical Theory Since Plato*, p. 1162.

[17]Northrop Frye, "The Motives of Metaphor," *The Educated Imagination* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964), p. 22.

[18]Smith, *Understanding Reading*, p. 12.

[19]Jean-Paul Sartre, "Why Write?" in *Critical Theory Since Plato*, p. 1062.